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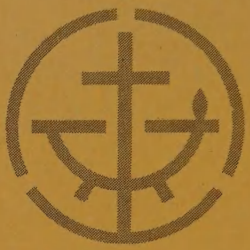
# TALKS

on the book of

# DANIEL

by

"JOSIAH HOPKINS"



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# TALKS

## on the book of

# DANIEL

by "JOSIAH HOPKINS"
( W. B. HOGG ) William

*"Josiah Hopkins" is the parson of the Country Church of Hollywood which is located at the intersection of Argyle and Yucca streets in Hollywood, California.*

## Preface

A fellow can't write a good pre-face until after he has written the book itself. I don't see why they call 'em pre-faces. It looks sorter like it might be deceivin' the public. I will never be a party to a thing like that. So I'm going to tell the truth: this was written after the book was finished. Sarah says there's another side to a pre-face: that is, looking at it from the standpoint of the reader, it is read before the book is read. In that case I reckon it will be all right to call it a pre-face. However, I don't think anybody ever reads 'em, so no great harm will come out of having one to this book.

Now take this book of Daniel: I've done said all I know and a "leetle the rise", as Lige Gupton says. I can't see much use of adding on more—course it makes the book a little bigger, and it might look a little more like the folks that bought it didn't lose so much.

There is one thing I'd like to say on the Book of Daniel. A soldier who never had seen an ocean went to France during the World War. When he landed at La Havre, he stood a-looking at the ship he got off. Somebody asked him what he was thinkin' about. He said: "Well, all I got to say is that Muddy Creek, where I was raised at, ain't first no longer. . . . . Why this ocean is deeper than that!"

It makes no difference where you have been swimmin' mentally, when you read through Daniel, you'll really find deep water.

Sarah's calling me to bring in stove wood. I'll have to bring this pre-face to a close. Do you see how I ever get anything done?

Yours truly,

Josiah Hopkins

## Dedication

As we grow older, memories of childhood playmates float back to us like perfume-laden breezes from a rose garden. I'm thinkin' now of "Sweet", my sister, who laughed and played with me across the sunny fields of Time that lie between the cradle and maturity. Through many golden hours, "Sweet" and I sat at mother's feet and listened to her read from God's precious Book.

Well, "Sweet" has been gone a long time now! But often I hear her silvery laughter comin' back to me from the Gates of Pearl. And, each time I hear it, in the later years of human life, it gets clearer and clearer!

So this feeble effort from an old country preacher is lovingly dedicated to the hope that "Sweet" and I, and all our neighbors, will some day meet the author of this book, Daniel, himself, and walk with him in white.

## A Comparison of Daniel and Revelation

The most careless reader of the books of Daniel and Revelation will notice at once how they resemble each other. Sarah gave me a good word to use the other day about both of them: "apocalypse", and that means, "the unveiling". Daniel is the apocalypse or unveilin' of the history of the Gentile nations as they relate to Jesus Christ and His Kingdom. Revelation is the unveilin' of Jesus Christ. Daniel is the apocalypse of the Old Testament, and Revelation is the apocalypse of the New Testament. Of course, when you read Daniel, you'll find that Christ is unveiled in Daniel too as well as in Revelation. When the mysterious metal image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream was explained, it was brought out in Daniel that the stone that would destroy this metal image was to be Jesus Christ. Oh, one wouldn't be far from the truth in sayin' that both Daniel and Revelation are unveilings of Jesus Christ. The greater part of Daniel's prophecy is concerned with the movement of the Gentile nations in the world and their final displacement by the reign of Jesus Christ. In Revelation, we have an unveilin' of what will happen after the events in Daniel have come to pass. In a way, Revelation is the completion of Daniel.

Both John and Daniel were exiled; John sent to the Isle of Patmos and Daniel to Babylon. Both passed through about the same spiritual experiences. They were crushed by great sorrows, suffered the loss of all things, and were brought to their high spiritual level through great tribulation. We know Daniel was cast into a lion's den, and tradition tells us that John was cast into a pot of boilin' oil which didn't even scorch him.

Daniel suffered under the wicked rule of Nebuchadnezzar; John, under the iron hand of a Roman Emperor. Daniel lived in the time of the golden head of the metal image; John, durin' the time of the iron legs which represented the Roman Empire. Both were caught up by the

Holy Spirit into the highest level perhaps that any human beings have ever known, and their minds spiritualized by their high prophetic office. Daniel dealt with the prophecies that covered Gentile dominion of the earth until the last days; John portrayed only those events immediately precedin' and followin' the second comin' of the Lord. It is true that John covered all time in Revelation, but passed over the pre-existant era of Christ with the one sentence, "He who was"; passed over the church age, or the time since Pentecost up until now, with merely mentioning the seven churches in two chapters. Daniel describes the beginnings of what is found completed in Revelation, so the apocalypse of John can never be truly understood without a knowledge of the book of Daniel. What Daniel sketched with a few bold strokes, John worked out in detail.

Both John and Daniel were greatly beloved. The book of Daniel tells us of an angel's announcement makin' known that Daniel was greatly beloved by the Lord. The Gospels tell us that John laid his head on the breast of Jesus and was always one of the selected ones whenever there was a great event like the transfiguration. Both lived to a great age, about one hundred years.

We have sketched some of the ways in which they were alike. Now, let us mark some of the differences between John and Daniel. Daniel was blue-blooded and of the royal family, without a doubt. John was just a fisherman. He came out of the crowd of humble people around the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Daniel wrote in the twilight of Biblical truth; John, under the blazin' illumination of the Holy Spirit. Daniel never saw more of God than the texture of a dream or a spiritual vision; John ate with the Lord, laid his head upon His breast, saw Him crucified, witnessed His ascension, saw the wounds in the body of the Lord durin' the forty days after the resurrection and before the ascension, and was in the upper room on the day of Pentecost.

Both of them were Jews, and I do not know which is

the greater miracle: for God to take an exiled Jew in Babylon, keep him from the wickedness of the greatest and most sinful city of the world at the time, stiffen him so that he could turn down every honor and offer of preferment, then let the whole current of Gentile history for thousands of years pass through his brain; or for the Lord to take up an illiterate Galilean fisherman, make him one of the occupants in the temple of fame, then, so elevate and spiritualize his mind as to lift him up to where he could glimpse the heavenly glories and unveil the Christ!

I am sure of this one thing, that prophecy reached its climax in the Old Testament in the writings of Daniel, and mounted to its pinnacle in the New Testament when God sent an angel to signify to John the unveilin' of the Lord Jesus Christ. Both were common men like you and me but were swept into the dizzy altitudes of spiritual experiences by divine power; Daniel, by the touch of angelic visitors; John, through the fallin' of the Holy Spirit in the upper room and other later spiritual touches that came to him for special need. Both died natural deaths at a ripe old age, and together both are walkin' today in white with God. But, what a record did they leave in the books that bear their names!

## A Talk on the Introduction to the Book of Daniel

For sixteen hundred years, the book of Daniel has been called the "critic's den". Against the twelve chapters of this little book, one can find many quiverin' arrows tipped with skepticism and shot from the bows of the folks who set out to criticise God's Book. Sarah was readin' to me the other day where a fellow named Porphyry, a Syrian, started the attack on this book in the third century after Christ, but he wasn't the last one; there's been a sight of them since then, who, if they wanted to shoot at the Bible, would always draw a bead on the book of Daniel. I'm not interested, however. I believe every word in the Bible. Of course, I believe it all about Daniel! I'm kinda like Lige Gupton was when he said that of course he believed the whale swallowed Jonah and spit him out, but he would believe it just as quick if the Bible had said that Jonah swallowed the whale, because he says that the Lord made man, and the Lord could make him ready for any emergency.

What Lige Guyton said is sorta like what happened to Brother Armstrong when some children went to the pulpit on Saturday and glued together some pages in his Bible. The Elder was ready to read his text. He picked up the Bible and read in Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him: male and female created He them." Then, he turned over the glued pages, and here is what was on the other side, "Three hundred cubits and the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits." Brother Armstrong read it all over again, then, adjusted his spectacles and said, "Brethren, that goes to show you how fearfully and wonderfully we are made!"

In all seriousness, neighbors, I believe that what the world is lookin' for today is somebody who really believes somethin', and I don't know of a better thing to believe

than the Bible. Just take it word for word just like it is!

It sorta tickles me for a fellow to say that there never was anybody by the name of Daniel, that there was just somebody else writin' that book and makin' out like his name was Daniel. Well, Ezekiel believed that such a man as Daniel lived, and that he was so noted for his righteousness that he was classed along with Noah, and in wisdom was like Job! Among other things, here's what the Bible says in Ezekiel 14:14-20: "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, said the Lord God." If there was any doubt in my mind, what the Lord said in Matthew 24:15 would settle it with me: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whosoever readeth, let him understand:)." It looks to me like if anybody believed the Bible at all, they would certainly take the Lord's word for it, for He surely knew what he was talkin 'about!

A fellow asked Sarah and me the other day how it was that Daniel's name isn't found in these old relics and monuments that they are diggin' up, if he was so big and important in Babylon. Well, Sarah answered him by sayin' that it was the custom of those old kings like Nebuchadnezzar to not write anything except what told about their own achievement and the big things they had done; they never told about any other little fellow, and they certainly wouldn't go out of their way to tell about Daniel, because they weren't interested in the religious part of it anyhow.

There is one fellow who brought out a good point here not long ago. He must be a mighty smart man; his name is John Urquhart. He wrote a book on "Inspiration and Accuracy of the Holy Scriptures". On pages three hundred and fifty-eight and three hundred fifty-nine, he brings out there that the master of the eunuchs, whose name in the Bible is Ashpenaz, was named in the Babylonian language, "Rabsaris". Lo, and behold, they picked up a piece of brick, and it's now in the British Museum and

has this fellow's name on it tellin' just about the same thing that Daniel told. Of course, for me, I don't have to have anything to bear out the story, but that ought to be encouragin' to some people who find their faith kinda takin' the limber-neck or gettin' flat feet sometime.

Oh, yes, it's all true, just like Daniel tells you about it. So, I think we might as well go right on and get to studyin' the book and look at it now in a general way. I think the best way to study the book of Daniel is to divide it into the two grand divisions into which it naturally falls; each one has six chapters. The first six chapters tell about history, and the second six chapters deal with prophecies.

These smart fellows that can read the original language tell us another interestin' thing about the book, that it's written in two languages. The first chapter and the first three verses of the second chapter are written in Hebrew, also chapters eight and twelve, but from the fourth verse of the second chapter to the end of the seventh chapter the language is Aramaic. Sarah says that's a mixture of Hebrew and Greek and was the language of trade and commerce in Daniel's time. You see, what concerns the Gentile nations is written in the language that would bring it to them, that was the Aramaic, the business language. What concerns the Jews was written in their own language, the Hebrew. It just goes to show how God works everything out when He is a-doin' it.

Now, we can find out a right smart about this man, Daniel. In fact, we know more about him, or at least we ought to know more about him from readin' the Bible than any other prophet. We are told that he was of the tribe of Judah and of noble, if not royal blood. He was carried captive from Jerusalem the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim in 606 B. C. That was the first time that Nebuchadnezzar started over to whip the people of Judah, and Daniel was about twenty years of age when he was taken to Babylon as an exile. We find that he was a right pert young fellow and learned well and rose rapidly in Babylon. At the death of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel went

into retirement and was not heard of again until he was called upon to read the writing on the palace wall that scared Belshazzar, and along with that, God had him pronounce the doom of Belshazzar. It is interestin' to note that he lived through the whole period of the seventy years while the Jews were captive in Babylon. He became the biggest man next to the king; well, at least, he was the chief president over the council of one hundred and twenty princes when Darius, the Median, took over everything. We also know what his age was at the time, ninety years old. The Book tells us that he was greatly beloved of God. He associated with kings and politicians, and yet, led a life without blemish. There never was a spot on his character. He talked with angels; he saw the Lord; and he had many visions of God. Perhaps the highest honor ever given to any man, unless it was the honor given to John when he wrote the Revelation, was when God gave to this little Jew there in Babylon, Daniel, the outline of the history of the great nations of the earth and let him see the outcome of the world's boasted civilization up to the time when governmental power would degenerate into the clay of democracy, socialism, and anarchy with nothing to hold it together. The highest point of it all was when the Lord Himself would displace all the earthly government and set up His millennial reign. Now, wasn't that something to go through one man's mind? If he hadn't been helped mightily by the Lord, his brain would have turned to a little piece of something that would look like breakfast bacon on a red hot stove.

It's sorta interestin' to turn the pages of your Bible and look up some of the things that led up to this writin' of the book of Daniel. You see, away back yonder in Genesis, we are told about the confusion of tongues when the folks set out to build the tower of Babel, so that they could go to heaven without havin' to fool with any sacrifices or do anything else that the Lord wanted them to do. Well, the Lord held the nations in check somehow a long time, so that no one of them was ever able to conquer the

others. It looks to me sorta like the Lord was tryin' to make the descendants of Abraham, that is, the Hebrew nation, the leadin' folks in all the world and give them the greatest empire. But, they were hard-headed and got to foolin' around with idols and messed things up, so that the Lord couldn't give them what He wanted for them. Isn't that true all through life? Doubtless, we'd have had a sight more ourselves today nationally and individually if we had let the Lord do with us like He wanted to, but you see, there are just certain things that He can't give unless we get into certain states of heart and mind. It seems like the Lord just says, "Well, if you don't want to get ready for it, do without it."

About seven hundred and twenty-one years before Christ was born, there was a king named Sargon in the country called Assyria. He tore out over there and took off ten of the tribes of Israel and carried them to Assyria. Sarah says she read in the history books that about one hundred and fifteen years later, this king, Nebuchadnezzar, came over and besieged Jerusalem and took the children of Israel, that is, in several parts, over to Babylon. The Lord let them stay there for seventy years. This last takin' off was of the other two tribes known as Judah. This last conquerin' of the Israelites must have been about six hundred and five years before Christ. The Bible tells us that Jehoiakim was king. In fact, that's the way the book of Daniel starts off; it says, "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it." That's what the Bible says.

Sarah says that the history books go on to say that this fellow, Nebuchadnezzar, took out after one of the kings of Egypt, Pharoah Necho, and ran him all the way to Egypt. While he had this good start, Nebuchadnezzar decided that he would go on over and take Jerusalem while he had his hand in it. Second Chronicles, chapter thirty-six, verses five to eight, tell us that Nebuchadnezzar loaded up King Jehoiakim with chains and was fixin' to take him to

Babylon, but Nebuchadnezzar got some kind of a message that his father was dead, so he turned King Jehoiakim loose and kinda trusted him, tellin' him to go on and run things the best he could under him while he went back to take over the Babylonian kingdom after his father's death. But, he sure took off a lot of things from Jerusalem! He took all the jewels, all the gold and the silver out of the temple; this fellow who was the master of the eunuchs, Ashpenaz, was with him, and he picked out from among the most promising young fellows the very finest, those that looked the best, and the smartest, and took them to Babylon, so that he could teach them the language of the Chaldeans and teach them how to succeed and become big men over there in that country.

This fellow, Jehoiakim, got too big for his breeches and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. Then, all the neighborin' nations around Jerusalem decided they would just rub him out, and they fought him and plundered the city until Jehoiakim died a disgraceful death accordin' to Jeremiah twenty-two, verses seventeen through nineteen.

The son of this fellow, Jehoiakim, Jehoiakin, started out to be king and only reigned for three months. The Bible tells us that this young man cut up and went on so and misbehaved so much that Nebuchadnezzar came back in five hundred and ninety-eight before Christ and captured Jerusalem again, takin' this young king, Jehoiakin, back to Babylon and along with him one hundred thousand craftsmen and smiths and ten thousand other captives, leaving all the poorest and most worthless of the people behind. But, if you are goin' to figure on any dates, I'd say that the captivity of the Jews began in 606 B. C. and closed with the fall of Babylon and the reign of Cyrus, who issued the edict for the Jews to return to Jerusalem in 506 B. C.

When Nebuchadnezzar left Jerusalem this last time and took the young fellow, Jehoiakin, with him, he made the uncle of Jehoiakin a little king over there to look after everything for him. This fellow reigned awhile, then, he

rebelled against Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar came back again. Everytime he came back, he would tear up something! So, this time when he captured the city, he burned down the temple and, as far as Sarah and I can find out, at this time the Jews as a nation ceased to exist. The Bible tells about it in Second Kings, chapter twenty-four, verses seventeen to twenty and chapter twenty-five, verses one to twenty.

### *The Times of the Gentiles*

All this that we have been talkin' about brings us up to talk for a little bit about this expression, "The times of the Gentiles". Elder Armstrong and myself were a-talkin' about it the other day. Now, among Bible students, that term means the time that the Jews went out of power, and the Gentiles came in. I heard a fine Jewish scholar the other day talkin' on this, and he said that the relation of the Gentiles and the Jews is something like a stick that you would hold up in your hand, the Jews are at one end, and the Gentiles are at the other; when one is up, the other is down. When the Jews went down, the Gentiles came up, and they will be up, accordin' to these folks who talk about the times of the Gentiles, and, in fact, accordin' to the Bible, until a certain time when the stick is goin' to be turned upside down, and the Jews will be up, and the Gentiles will be down.

Well, if there is such a thing as the times of the Gentiles, you'll have to start that from 606 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar took off the first of the Jewish captives, and the undoin' of Jerusalem and the Jewish reign began. This ushered in the Kingdom of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar which was the first world-wide kingdom that this poor old world had ever seen. From that time until this, kingdom after kingdom has arisen; the lines of empires have moved about over the face of the world; the Jews have not come back into power, and we are still livin' under the dominion of the Gentiles and will until the Lord sets up His millenium.

I hope that in talkin' about these things that Sarah and I have discussed so many times around the fireside, that nobody gets mixed up. The truth of the business is that about all we know is what is in the Bible, and it is there for anybody to read. My idea is for all the neighbors to read it for themselves and work out whatever theory they want to have about the times of the Gentiles, the millenium, and such like, but I have just set down here some of the things that Sarah and I have talked over, and I think it will be a help to you as you study the book of Daniel. Of course, I don't know much, just what I read in the Bible and hear the neighbors talk about, so I pass it on to you, askin' the blessings of the Lord upon it, such as it is.

## Babylon

Here in this city of Babylon, which really meant the "gate of God", the judgment of God was pronounced upon the Godless empires of all time. There is no older city than Babylon. We are told in the tenth chapter of Genesis that a son of Ham, Cush, had a son named Nimrod, who "began to be a mighty one in the earth and that the beginning of his kingdom was Babel." That is our Babylon. Sarah tells me that among the people in that country now around the two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, they are still talkin' about Nimrod, and they still call him "the mighty hunter before the Lord." I don't reckon there's any doubt but that the Babylonian Empire ran from the first big fellow named Nimrod on down through the kings whose names are mentioned in the book of Daniel.

By the time Nebuchadnezzar became king, the Empire of Babylon had conquered everything East and West until it was the greatest kingdom on earth. Sarah tells me that she read where a fellow named Philostratus in writin' about those days says that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom went as far as Spain and France. We also read that the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar included much of what is now Russia and all down around Greece and Turkey. It must have been a powerful kingdom!

It is said that he built a wall around Babylon so thick and so high that it contained more masonry than is in the Chinese wall. The area of the city was one hundred and thirty square miles. In this wall it is said that there were one hundred passage-ways, and each one of these passage-ways was closed by a gate of solid brass. Nebuchadnezzar built artificial mountains and mighty temples, and to this day some of the ruins of these temples can be seen on the site of ancient Babylon. Somebody was sayin' not long ago in a paper that I read that one of the piles of ruins is one hundred and forty feet high. He also made a reser-

voir to store up surplus water that was one hundred and thirty-eight miles around and twenty-fathoms deep, and he drained the Euphrates River into it to fix up the water supply.

Over in Genesis 10:11-12, we are told that one of Ham's descendants, Asshur, founded Ninevah, another great city that we ought to know something about when we go to studyin' Babylon. Nineveh became the capital of Assyria. In about 1270 B.C., the history books tell us that Assyria conquered Chaldea or Babylonia and that for several centuries the history of Babylon was over-shadowed by the history of Nineveh. It is interestin' to find that about seven hundred and twenty years before Christ, a man by the name of Berodach-baladan, who had become king of Babylon, sent ambassadors to Hezekiah, king of Judah, and looked over all of his treasures. You'll find that in Second Kings, chapter twenty, verses twelve to eighteen, and in Isaiah, chapter thirty-nine, verses one to seven. A few years later, Sargon, King of Assyria, defeated and dethroned Berodach-baladan. Then, comes along Sennacherib who completed the whippin' of Babylon, and he added it to the Assyrian Empire about 690 B.C. The conquerin' of Nineveh and the overthrowin' of Assyria happened about 625 B.C. by a fellow named Cyaxeres, and a man by the name of Nabopolassar started the kingdom of Babylon to goin' again. Now, this king, Nabopolasser, was the great king of Babylon who was succeeded by his son, Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest king of ancient times. Now, it was this king, Nebuchadnezzar, who did all the big things that I was a-tellin' you about.

He surely made a beautiful city out of Babylon. Sarah says that she's been a-readin' somewhere where the city was fifteen miles on one side and was in the shape of a square, and it was sixty miles around. The wall was eighty-seven feet thick. Sarah was readin' after a fellow by the name of Herodotus who says the wall was three hundred and fifty feet high, had two hundred and fifty towers on it, and was wide enough for six double teams

of horses to go side by side at the same time on it. Outside of this wall was a big ditch filled with water from the Euphrates River and crossed by draw-bridges in front of each one of the hundred or more gates. There were twenty-five big avenues one hundred and fifty feet wide runnin' across the city from north to south, and then, the same number goin' across these from east to west, makin' six hundred and seventy-six great squares, and each one of these squares when cut up by these streets all a-meetin', was three-fifths of a mile on each side of the square.

This big river, Euphrates, ran right through the city, kinda anglin' across it, and on its banks were great palaces. What beats all is that Sarah was tellin' me she read somewhere that there was a kind of tube runnin' under the bed of the river, and along at different points in this tube were banquetin' rooms made out of brass. At one end of this river tube was the temple of Baal, and from what Sarah tells me she's read, it must have been the finest furnished religious building the world ever saw. It had in it one golden image, forty-five feet high, valued at seventeen million, five hundred thousand dollars. Sarah says that she saw where some fellow added up all the stuff that was in the temple and said that it was worth over two hundred million dollars.

Another thing that's powerful interestin' to me, in fact, the history writers say that it was one of the seven wonders of the world, is the hangin' gardens of Babylon. These gardens were four hundred feet square, and each one was put above the other, smaller and smaller up to a point that was three hundred and fifty feet from the ground. The stairways goin' up from layer to layer were ten feet wide. Each layer was covered with asphalt, then brick, dirt, etc., and all kinds of trees and plants were growin' on each layer. Oh, it must have been a beautiful sight! The fellows who saw it and wrote about it in those days say that standin' off at a distance, lookin' at it, it looked just like a mountain covered with trees. But, here is the catch in it: this fellow, Nebuchadnezzar, had a wife that

sure had him down. Her name was Amyitis, and her pa was Cyaxares, who was king of a country called Media where there were a lot of mountains, so naturally this wife of Nebuchadnezzar's got home-sick. Instead of lettin' her go back home to her pa, he just built her a mountain there in this flat country on the bank of the Euphrates River so that she would be satisfied. It's powerful what a dotin' husband will do to keep his wife satisfied. It just goes to show that the human race hasn't changed, for the same thing is goin' on around us all the time.

Besides all these hangin' gardens, there were many beautiful parks and land that the people were allowed to farm. Sarah says that she read somewhere that there were over a million people livin' in this town of Babylon. All of this just goes to bear out what Isaiah says in the thirteenth chapter and the nineteenth verse, "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldean's pride".

Jeremiah sure did know a lot about what was goin' to come to pass. I wish you would look at what he says in the twenty-fifth chapter, beginnin' with verse nine, "Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations around about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover, I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

Well, that's just what happened. It sure is impressive to know that a long time before Nebuchadnezzar ever took out after that Pharoah in Egypt and then went over to Jerusalem, that this blessed man of God, Jeremiah, knew all about it. It just shows that the Lord knows how to sweep the centuries with one glance and then reveal

that to the person who is high enough on the spiritual level to be able to get it.

Do you notice that the Lord in Jeremiah 25:8-11, calls Nebuchadnezzar, "my servant". Yes, the Lord knows how to reach down and take hold of kings and the big men of the world and make them carry out His purposes just like He did that night when He was ready for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem of Judea. He made the Roman king over at Rome send out an order for everybody to go to their home-town and be recorded so they could pay the taxes. Well, that just made possible the prophecy that had been told away back yonder when it was said that Jesus Christ would be born in Bethlehem of Judea. Right this minute, while you're readin' this line, the Lord is pullin' the levers and gettin' things started that will keep on a-carryin' out His plans right down to the last minute of the age in which we are livin'. It ought to make us all mighty anxious and mighty willin' to be servants of the Lord and do just as He tells us, so that we can get in step with the on-marchin' providences of the Lord and be ready for whatever He has to bring into our lives or to bring upon the world.

It's more than an accident that Jeremiah was able to tell just exactly how long the Jews would be held captive in Jerusalem. He says here in this chapter twenty-five that they would be there seventy years, and that's just what happened! I think this about gets us ready now to get into the book and see what we can get out of it. I promise you to do the best I can, as weak as I am, and as feeble-minded as I am, with the help of the Lord.

## The First Chapter of Daniel

Probably about the best way we can study this first chapter is to take a text and then try to gather around that one text the things that are in this chapter. About the best text in this first chapter is the one, "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."

Verse three in the first chapter tells us that the king told Ashpenaz, who was the master of the eunuchs, to pick out certain of the children of Israel of the king's seed and of the princes. Well, this settles two things; one is that since Daniel was picked out, he must have been of the king's seed, had royal blood in his veins; also, the children that were chosen were goin' to have a mighty good chance, such as it was.

Notice here that the young fellows who were well favored were picked; I think that means that they were kinda good lookin'. They were skillful in wisdom; that means that they were pert and apt to learn. Also, they were cunning in knowledge; that means they were pretty quick at pickin' up things. It says that they wanted to teach them the learnin' and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

Now, this old king, Nebuchadnezzar, and this fellow, Ashpenaz, thought that about the best way to make a fellow smart was to feed him a certain kind of food and give him a certain kind of wine while they were teachin' him all the learnin'. Well, that won't work, because some of the greatest men that the world ever saw didn't have much to eat. Sarah tells me that a lot of the fellows who are the greatest in history had a terrible time goin' from place to place; in fact, they were almost tramps. It looks like a fellow has to die before his books or paintings are

worth anything, or the poetry pieces that he writes amount to a hill of beans. Yes, I reckon most of the great books, the great poems, and the great pictures were done by fellows who had a powerful hard time gettin' by. So, you'll have to do away with any argument about feedin' people for makin' them great. Take Abraham Lincoln for instance, he came up on pretty light rations. So did James Garfield, and so did a lot of the other fellows who have amounted to so much in the world.

Verse six tells us who the leadin' young fellows were that were picked. These were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. At least, these were the names that their mammas gave them, but these weren't good enough accordin' to the Babylonians and they gave them new-fangled names. That makes me think of big society people. Did you ever notice that you never know what a man's or woman's middle name is until they get prominent in society? And then they dig up every name that's in the whole family tree and keep stringin' one right after the other. Well, that's the way of the world, and that's the way it was in Babylon in those days.

There was another significance about changin' their names. Sarah tells me that she was readin' a book by a fellow who knows this Babylonian language, and he says that there was a great significance in every change that they made in their names. They changed Daniel's name to Belteshazzar. Daniel's name in Hebrew meant "God is my judge", but the name that they changed it to, Belteshazzar, meant "whom Bel favors". Hananiah meant "beloved of the Lord". They changed his name to Shadrach, which meant in the Babylonian language "illumined by the sun god". Mishael's name meant "who is as God". They changed his to Meshach, which meant "who is like the god of love". Azariah, meaning "the Lord is my help" was changed to Abednego, "the servant of the god Nego". Now, you see that they were tryin' to "soft soap" these young fellows, thinkin' that if they bragged on them by changin' their names to these heathen names, they could

make heathens out of them. But, listen, neighbors, changin' a fellow's name never changes his nature

Of course, in the Bible, the Lord often changed a fellow's name when his nature was changed, like "Saul" was changed to "Paul", but it was only after his experience on the road to Damascus. "Abram" was changed to "Abraham" after he had made that covenant with the Lord. But, here, the Babylonians just went ahead and hung names on these boys like you would hang tags on a suit of clothes. Well, that didn't change them! Do you know why? Their mothers and fathers had had them too long. You can take a young boy or a young girl, and if you've got them in hand and are teachin' them right, livin' before them a life that is upright, it doesn't take many years before they have a real character that's what it ought to be. Changin' their names is like pourin' water on a duck's back, it just pours right off. They'll have the same natures.

I reckon these young fellows were around eighteen or twenty, just at the time when it's dangerous to be offerin' them honor and riches and a new name. But, that makes me think of another fellow who was very much like Daniel and these young men. Did you ever read about Joseph? Both Daniel and Joseph were taken away to strange and heathen countries; both were great dreamers and interpreters of dreams. The characters of both had a mighty bad strain. Joseph was tested in the house of a rich fellow by the name of Potiphar, and Daniel, in the palace of the king of Babylon, but both Joseph and Daniel came through all right and were a great blessing to the places where they stayed, and both were raised by the Lord to great places of honor. Do you know what the secret was? Both of them were true to their early trainin'.

You'll have to know something about the eatin' habit over there in Babylon to realize what a strain these boys were under. You see, they were Jews, and they had been taught what they could eat and what they couldn't eat, so eatin' was really a part of their religion. When the

Babylonians sat down to eat, they offered a portion of everything to their gods, so these young fellows didn't want to eat the stuff that had been dedicated to heathenish gods; they didn't want to get in the habit of goin' that far with these heathen. So, they just squared their jaws and sat back sayin' they would rather be poor and unnoticed and remain true to their religion than to run with this idolatrous crowd and eat what they ate and do what they did and be what they were. For instance, in Leviticus 11:1-7, we are told that these boys' parents told them that they ought not to eat any hog meat. Then, Leviticus 17:10-14 told them that they couldn't eat any meat from which the blood had been drawn or that had been offered to an idol.

There's another thing here that kinda touches me. You notice, Daniel purposed not to defile himself. Have you ever thought, neighbors, that's the only way you can be defiled. The world can't defile you. Things that you come up against never contaminate you. A person is never defiled until he defiles himself. It's kinda like suicide. You can't commit suicide except by yourself. If it's an accident or violent death, it isn't suicide. That's the way it is with defilement. Nobody is ever defiled until he puts the stain on himself.

There were some other fellows in the Bible that were up against this same thing. For instance, the young fellow, Moses, was picked up out of an ark of bullrushes and put in Pharaoh's house, but his mother had had him too long. When the time came, he struck out for his mother and his mother's God. That made him an exile in the land of Midian from which he came back to lead the children of Israel out of bondage.

It took a lot of nerve for Daniel to turn down all these offers. You know, they had a mighty well-developed system of trainin' and education there in Babylon. They offered all their trainin' and opportunity of advancement to these young men on the condition that they would defile themselves. But, these young fellows had found out from

their religious trainin' that to sell out always means to be disappointed. They were true to God, and you have only to read the book of Daniel to find out how true God was to them. When the fiery furnace time came, and the lion's den time came, God was there with great deliverance.

## A Talk by Josiah Hopkins on the Second Chapter of Daniel

We come now to study the second chapter of Daniel which is famous as the dream chapter in which the metal image was revealed to the king of Babylon. Smart fellows tell us that when we dream, we are about half way between bein' dead asleep and bein' awake. Then, there's another kind of dreamin' that occurs somewhere in there about which we know nothing. Smart fellows tell us that dreams that we can recall happen to us just as we are waking up, and come very fast.

I remember readin' a story once when I was in school about a fellow that was goin' to get up by an alarm-clock. He heard the clock start to alarmin', but he couldn't get awake enough to cut it off. He heard the clock alarmin', then, he dropped back into sleep, and between the time that the clock started and he dropped back to sleep, the dreamer went over his whole life from babyhood to old age. In other words, his dream covered at least fifty or sixty years while the clock was alarmin' one or two minutes. Many things like that allow the fellows who make a specialty of this to say that dreams happen mighty fast, faster than we can possibly realize.

Visions occur when we are awake, when our mind is so absorbed on some thought that we don't know what else is goin' on around us, and the vision occupies everything. Visions are connected with the eye someway, and the brain picks them up. A dream is another thing. It occurs on the inside of us in our minds somewhere in that space between bein' sound asleep enough to be unconscious, and bein' fully awake.

Another funny thing about dreams, the dreamer mixes up things with which he is familiar. For instances, somebody livin' during the Civil War days would never dream about armored tanks and submarines. That makes it sorta funny about Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Had he dreamed

about things with which he was familiar, he would have dreamed of stone statues like the pyramids or the sphinx. But this vision that he saw was not like any other image in the world at that time. It was made about an image out of metal—gold, silver, brass, and iron.

There are lots of funny things about that image that let us know that it was not the product of the mind of Nebuchadnezzar. It is because of these things about which we have just been talkin' that the first verse of the second chapter of Daniel says that the "spirit of Nebuchadnezzar was troubled, and his sleep brake from him". I think if he had been dreamin' about pyramids and things that he might have been familiar with, it wouldn't have bothered him. Notice that the king called for all the help with which he was familiar; he called for the magicians, astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell him about his dream. The magicians were the fellows who did all kinds of curious things like turnin' rods into snakes. They practiced those things and made a kind of religion out of them. The astrologers were a set of fellows who made out like they could tell what was goin' to happen in the future by what they saw in the stars. It was very popular among the people over in that part of the country at that time, and, in a measure, it is till this day. The sorcerers were folks who said that the dead told them about things that were goin' to be, and they made a specialty out of havin' the evil spirits talk to them and tell them all about everything that was goin' on and would happen. The Chaldeans were an educated set of fellows who knew something about the mind, and they had some laws by which they could work things out; and, I reckon, of the crowd, they were the best. I have read after fellows who said that Daniel was one of these Chaldeans, because that was what they were teachin' him there in the University of Babylon,—the Chaldean philosophy. They say that that's why he got in on this thing and had a chance to talk to the king.

You notice that this king had a way of catchin' fellows

so that they couldn't fool him. That fellow, Nebuchadnezzar, was a pretty smart king after all. Like so many fortune tellers do today, these different ones, the magicians, astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, said to the king, "Give us some idea about the dream."

It tells us here in verse five that the king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut to pieces."

You see, the king knew that if they were smart enough to know what his dream meant, they ought to know what he dreamed. That's one good way to catch a fortune-teller; if he knows enough to tell you all about the future, just remember he doesn't have to ask you any questions!

One can hardly blame the king for flyin' off the handle, gettin' mad, and sayin', "Ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof."

Then, the Chaldeans came back in the tenth verse and said, "There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean."

They made the mistake that lots of people are makin' today, thinkin' that 'cause they don't know about a matter, that nobody else in the world is able to find out anything about it. You see, it's that same old egotism that comes right down from Adam that makes us believe that if we can't do it, well, who can? Ignorance has a way of producin' the greatest egotists in the world. The ignorant person says, "What I don't know, ain't worth knowin'." The person who lives in one little neighborhood and never goes anywhere gets an idea that there is nothing else in the world except right in that country and around there. He winds up by sayin', "Well, what's not right around here isn't worth seein' at all anyhow." It's terrible to be like that, but that's the price of bein' little and being

ignorant. One of the finest things in the world is to leave a little gap in your fence, so that new thoughts can come in, and new ideas can graze in your pasture. Remember, neighbors, that you haven't got a fence around it all!

Verse twelve shows us that the king acted just about as big a fool as these Chaldeans, sorcerers, astrologers, and magicians did. He hauled off and got mad, sayin' that he was goin' to kill all the wise men of Babylon. You see, he figured that because his little set of paid, smart fellows didn't know it, there was nobody else in the world that did. In other words, he made the same mistake here that he makes a little further on in the book, he left God out of the program and then got mad and threw up everything because it all went to pieces. Why, what can anybody expect when they start out to find the solution of every problem purely through human wisdom, expectin' to find human forces able to do everything and to supply all the strength they need? They have to give God a chance.

That's where Nebuchadnezzar acted the fool. Yes, he was goin' to kill everybody, goin' to rub out all the smart men, and he just soured on the world because he got one disappointment. Isn't that just like people? I'll guarantee that there's a sight of folks in the world today who have lost faith in everything, everybody, in the government, even in the Bible, and the Lord Himself, because they've lost faith in some institution or some individual. Now, neighbors, be careful! Give God a chance to demonstrate that He can do the thing that hasn't been done. He can solve the problem that hasn't been solved.

It tells us in the thirteenth verse that they sought Daniel and his fellows so they could kill them. Well, that naturally put Daniel up on his toes, along with all those other picked young fellows. I'll tell you, neighbors ,when somebody starts out for you with a warrant and a sword and is goin' to cut off your head, or feed you to the lions, it will put you down on your knees, and you'll start to askin' God if He can't do something about it.

In the fifteenth verse, we find out there what Daniel did. The fellow who was goin' out to kill them all and had charge of the killin' squad, was Arioch. He was captain of the king's guard.

When he came to where Daniel and his companions were, Daniel said, "Wait a minute, just give me a chance! I believe that the Lord will protect us, if you give us a chance. He'll do something about this thing. Don't cut off our heads so soon."

Daniel's earnestness impressed this fellow, Arioch. It's time for a fellow to be earnest when he's fixin' to be killed! Arioch went to the king and said, "You know, this fellow here named Daniel sure impressed me. Don't cut his head off until you give him and his God a chance to do something about it."

So, it says that Daniel went in and asked the king if he would give him time. He said that if he would, he would show the king the interpretation of his dream. The king told him it would be all right, and that he would give him a certain length of time. You see, Daniel couldn't get away, it was too far back to Jerusalem anyhow, and he felt like the Lord had him there for some purpose. There wasn't anything for him to do but to go to the house where he stayed, and start prayin'.

Verse seventeen tells about how he came in. He went in there where Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were, and he said, "Well, we're in a pickle now! The king has dreamed something, and he can't think of what he dreamed, and he's goin' to cut everybody's head off that's been makin' out like they knew something unless they can tell him what he dreamed and explain what it means. I think we'd better have a prayer meetin'."

Somebody says, "Well, Brother Josiah, how do you know they had a prayer meetin'?"

Well, you read there in the eighteenth verse where it says, "They would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret." That means they just got down on their knees and called long distance and said, "Now,

Lord, we are in a tight place; you know everything; you allowed us to come here; you've given us strength to stand true. Now, it's time to help us." I know that the Lord never lets a request like that go unanswered.

Verse nineteen says, "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven." There's another suggestion about that prayer meetin'. They had a praise service after the message came from heaven.

Verse twenty tells us some of the things that Daniel said, "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for the wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter."

Yes, Brother Daniel was right. The Lord knows the secret things; He can solve every problem. He can pierce every darkness with His glorious presence, and right at this minute, He has light for everyone of you who are in darkness or bondage, and I feel like cryin' out with Daniel again, "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His."

Daniel must have been a mighty fine man, for he went to Arioch and didn't do like a lot of us fellows would have done. We would have gone in there and said, "Well, I've got it! Boy, I brought home the bacon, leave it to me!", allowin' the rest of the crowd to be put to death. But, no, sir, he went in and said to the fellow who had charge of the king's guard and who was goin' to do the killin' of all these wise men, "Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation."

Daniel was in a sorta tight place when the king told him to come in. The king looked at him and said, "Are you able to do it?"

Daniel answered and said, "The secret which the king hath demanded, cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king: But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these."

You notice what certainty he had? We need faith like that. Now, very likely, the devil said to him, "Suppose you make a mistake, you'll sure lose your head." But, he gambled everything on God, and you can do that, neighbors, and you'll never be disappointed. This young exile in the most depraved city perhaps the world has ever known, stood flat-footed and alone there in the king's palace and gambled his head against his faith in God.

Notice another thing: Daniel didn't brag about bein' smart. He said that the secret wasn't revealed to him because he was smarter than anybody else, but it was for a purpose and to help the king to know the thoughts of his own heart and understand what was goin' to happen in the last days. All the way through, you'll find that Daniel gives God the glory, and that's a mighty good lesson to us. If we would do that with what wisdom we have and with what property and money we have and with what blessings and successes we have, I believe that the blessings of Heaven would rest more abundantly upon us all.

Then, Daniel set out to tell the king what he saw. He saw an image, the head was of fine gold, the breast and arms were of silver, and the belly and thighs of brass, the legs were of iron, and the feet of iron and clay mixed. Then, he went on and said, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces."

Then, Daniel went on to say that the iron and the clay and the brass, silver, and the gold were broken to pieces and were blown around like chaff on a threshin' floor. The wind carried them, and there was no place found for them, and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

That was a peculiar dream, wasn't it? One of the strangest things about it to me is that if a man had been makin' it up, he would have had the stone fall on some vital part of the image. But, no, the stone fell upon the feet. That leads us to be all the more sure that this is a time affair, and the stone fell at the last part of the time which would begin at the head and wind up at the feet. You notice that the stone that fell upon the feet destroyed the head, the breast, the arms, the thighs, the belly, the legs, and all.

Now, Daniel set out to explain it all to the king. The first thing he said was, "Thou art this head of gold." In other words, this image deals with nations and kingdoms, and the head, the golden part, is Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar is the great golden head of it. Then, he went on to say that after this, shall arise another kingdom, then, there'll be another one of brass, and the fourth kingdom of iron. You notice that the further down they went in time, the less valuable they were: gold, silver, brass, and iron. Neighbors, that's just the way it happened! After Babylon, came a kingdom that was in comparison about like silver is to gold, and after that another one that was about like brass to gold and silver, and, then, another that was about like iron in relation to these other metals.

Daniel went on to point out how this iron would break into pieces everything, so that this kingdom would be an iron-like kingdom that would break others as it ruled.

Then, he went on and showed him that the fourth kingdom would be out of iron, but would be divided into two parts like the two legs of the image and would wind up in the feet down towards the end of this. Down towards the end, the iron kingdom would have ten other kingdoms

that would be like the ten toes on the feet, but all of them would be made up of mixed forces, iron on the one side and clay on the other. There are a lot of Bible students who say that down towards the end of the last kingdom, the Roman Kingdom, there would be two forces, one would be the iron aristocracy of the Old Roman Empire, and the other would be the clay which is made up of democracy, the voice of the people, mixed in with the iron of Rome's rule.

Daniel told him about the stone that was cut out of the mountain. You notice, it was made without hands. The other kingdoms may have been created by human power, but this stone came down out of the heavens without a finger print of a man on it, fallin' on the end of the Roman Empire, that is, the feet, and just tore everything to pieces and destroyed all the other kingdoms.

You notice that in verse forty-four a very peculiar thing about this last one, the kingdom that rose up after the stone fell; it says, "It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." That sounds mighty like the Lord, doesn't it, comin' down and settin' up something that would never end? A government that would take the place of all the other kingdoms. No wonder verse forty-six tells us that Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, but he made the mistake of worshipin' Daniel, instead of worshipin' God. He wanted everybody to offer sweet odors and gifts to Daniel. Isn't that just like the world? Instead of givin' God the praise, they give it to the person who brought the message.

Of course, the king said with his mouth to Daniel, "Your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of lords." But, you notice sayin' it didn't mean much, because he went right on bein' just the same old Nebuchadnezzar that he always had been. But, he did make Daniel a great man and gave him many gifts. It goes on to say that he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

The last verse winds up by addin' one more word of

praise to Daniel. He never forgot his friends. He requested the king to set up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego with the affairs of the province. Yes, that's the mistake that so many people make, they forget the people that have stood by them through thick and thin. How many times this has happened in the world: that a man receives help from a friend and then straightway forgets him. We all are glad that the second chapter of Daniel winds up by sayin' that Daniel sat in the gate of the king. All power to him and all blessings to him! He stood true and received his first great commission from Heaven; and now comes this great honor in the province of Babylon. Thank God for it, but remember there still were stormy times ahead. Everytime a man gets a great honor, he might as well brace himself for a great bump that's comin', and it won't be long!

*The Fulfillment of this Dream*

Since it's been a right smart while since Nebuchadnezzar dreamed this dream and Daniel explained it, I told Sarah it would be a pretty good idea for her to go through her history books and give me some idea about how all this turned out, and here's what pages of history reveal, that is, that's what Sarah says.

Nebuchadnezzar, after reignin' forty-four years, died five hundred and sixty-one years before Christ. He had a boy that didn't do so well; this name was Evil-Merodach. He wore the crown for about two years, then, his brother-in-law killed him. Then, this fellow was king about four years and was killed in battle in 556 B.C. There was a kind of a half-witted child named Laborosoarchod that somehow fooled around and got a-hold of the kingdom; but his big name didn't do him much good. He lasted about nine months, and somebody beat him to death. They messed around and killed each other and fought and tore up in general until they just about wrecked everything. All the time, the Persians were eyein' Babylon and all the treasures that they had, so one of the Per-

sian leaders, a fellow named Nabonidus just took the thing and made his son, Belshazzar, the second ruler and left him in charge of the city. By the way, that explains what has always troubled a lot of people, why it was that Daniel was called the "third ruler" in the kingdom when he was promised power. Well, it was because Nabonidus was the first one, Belshazzar was the second one; that made Daniel the third ruler in the kingdom.

When Belshazzar had his dream and Daniel interpreted it, Darius, the Median, came and took everything, and that put an end to the Babylonian Empire as a political force on the earth, but its religious influence is felt in the world to this day and will be until what is described in Revelation, the final destruction of Babylon, takes place.

The second Empire, that represented by the shoulders and arms, made out of silver, proved to be that of the Medes and the Persians. The fifth chapter of Daniel, verses thirty and thirty-one, tells about the one goin' out and the other comin' in. In the Mede and Persian affair, there was an uncle and nephew who cut quite a caper. Darius was the uncle, and Cyrus was his nephew. I want you to know that between these two fellows things were torn up around that country!

Darius ruled about two years after Belshazzar's experience with the hand-writin' on the wall. Cyrus' father, Cambyses, king of Persia, died, and it left Cyrus the head man over the Medes and the Persians.

After about seven years, Cyrus left the Empire to his son whom he also called Cambyses. It went on down like that until three hundred and thirty-five years before Christ when a fellow by the name of Darius-longimanus (meaning—Darius, the Long-handed) ruled as the last of the long line of kings. So, prophecy pointed out his end when Alexander the Great in three hundred and thirty B.C. conquered the Persian Empire.

That brings us into the reign of the brass of the image. This fellow, Alexander, was a Greek. His Empire was of short duration. After eight short years, Alexander died

of drunkenness and fever in 323 B.C., and by the way, he died in Babylon. The story is told that when he died, they put his body on a beautiful chariot and carried him through the streets of the city, and as the chariot jostled along the streets, the folded hands of the monarch of the world fell off to one side, and they were open and empty!

We want to keep in mind that in the metal image, it didn't say that these kingdoms would succeed one another without any break; for that's just what happened when Alexander went out. The Roman Empire as an empire didn't really start till about thirty years before Christ. That's when the Romans conquered Egypt and made themselves the rulers of the world.

In studyin' the metal image, you'll not notice anything about the interval between the fall of Alexander and the beginnin' of the Roman conquest, but in studyin' the story about the he-goat, chapter eight, verses twenty-one and twenty-two, you'll find out about the four-fold division of the kingdom when Alexander went out of the picture.

Now, the book of Daniel nowhere calls the fourth empire, that of iron, which would be finally mixed with clay, the Roman Empire, but Sarah says that every student of history, after readin' the history of the Roman Empire and readin' Daniel, will in a minute say that that's bound to have been the one that it was talkin' about. But, of course, I don't know much; I just want to leave it to you for such as it is.

An interestin' thing about this image is that three out of the four of these metals and kingdoms were described before they ever came into existence. Of course, the Babylonian Kingdom was in existence, but the other three were not. It looks to me like this is a pretty good argument that the Lord was tellin' Daniel things that were goin' to come to pass.

Now, just a word about that fourth empire. The legs of that image were a whole lot longer than all the other parts. Well, just so was the Roman Empire. The legs or the iron empire was the only one that was divided into two

parts; that's just what happened to the Roman Empire. It was divided into east and west; Constantinople became the capitol of the East, and Rome became the capitol of the West part of it in 364 A.D.

Did you notice in studyin' the metal image that the head was just one power, but that the next one would be under two powers, the two arms; so it was with the Medes and the Persians. And the next one was four-fold, and you'll find that brought out in the story of the he-goat in the eighth chapter. The last one was first two-fold and then wound up in a ten-crown empire, the ten toes on the two feet. Now, as far as I know that hasn't come to pass yet. That may be in the makin' now while Europe is a boilin' pot of warfare and political disturbance. To cap the climax, over all these ten toes, many Bible students expect that there will be a ruler, and that this ruler will be the Anti-christ. Just who he is, we don't know, but the Bible has a right smart to say about him.

Some fellow said to me the other day that he thought that fallin' of the stone was when Christ came in Bethlehem of Judea on the first Christmas night. I said to him, "Brother, that can't be because in that case it would be the iron part of the Roman Empire smiting the stone, but the Book here says that the stone will come down out of Heaven and smite the whole image. Since it was Rome that killed Jesus, it looks to me like it refers rather to the second comin' of Christ. It looks to me like the best explanation of the ten toes that come at the end of this iron kingdom is that there will be ten kingdoms rise up out of the different parts of the Roman Empire, and over them all, there will be one person who will be known as the Anti-christ. And when this miraculous stone comes down out of Heaven, it will be the Anti-christ and his rule who will be ground to powder. Notice what Jesus says in Matthew 21:44, "And whosoever shall fall on this stone (Christ) shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

Not only will the Anti-christ be broken or ground to

powder, but all the governments that have left God out of their program will suffer likewise.

Someone will doubtless say, "Well, Brother Josiah, if all these kingdoms like Babylon, Media, Persia, Greece, and Rome have passed out, how are you goin' to explain how this stone that will fall at the end and will grind all these empires to pieces, and how the wind will blow them over the earth like the wind on a summer threshin' floor?" Well, my answer to that would be this: while these empires have passed out as far as actual political domination is concerned, their territory and their influence remain. No one would tell you that the Roman Empire has passed away. Mussolini has lately revived it, and even at this time, he is buildin' a colossal statue to himself and tryin' to revive Rome like it was in its golden days under Augustus. Not only that, but also the Roman language has leaked out into all languages nearly over the earth, and its laws and its customs have circled the globe. Babylonian religion is still rampant in different forms. Grecian philosophy and the customs and practices and the influence of the Medes and the Persians are still in the world today. So, there will be a lot of these old empires left when the stone falls and crushes them into powder, and the winds of God's wrath finally blow them into annihilation.

## A Talk on the Third Chapter of Daniel

Didn't I tell you that Nebuchadnezzar wasn't changed when he told Daniel that his God was the God of the universe? No, here we find him in the third chapter buildin' an image of gold to himself. A lot of people would like to do that. The difference is that Nebuchadnezzar had the nerve and the power to go on and do it. The dimensions of this image always interested me. It was sixty cubits high and six cubits wide. I don't know whether these dimensions were accidental or not, but too many sixes in the thing always scares me! It makes me think of that Philistine family that had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. You know, this six business is brought out in Revelation where it says that the sign of the Anti-christ will be six sixty-six. Well, we won't have time to get into that here, but, anyway, Nebuchadnezzar went ahead in his pride and built himself a big golden image, and whenever a fellow does that it always heads him for a peck of trouble.

Nebuchadnezzar sent word out to all the princes and governors and captains, judges, treasurers, counsellors, even the sheriffs, and the rulers everywhere to come to the dedication. So, some fellow got up and said, "To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up."

Everytime I read that list of instruments, it kinda amuses me. It reminds me of a colored brother that came to me one day and asked me if I knew where he could get a "peeseltree", and I said, "No, I don't know where you'll get one!"

"Oh," I said, "Brother, that was a psaltery."

He said, "Well, I'm glad you told me, I thought it was a "peeseltree". I just imagined they must make mighty pretty music."

I don't know what that sackbut was either. I have seen a dulcimer; it's a funny lookin' thing. It looks like a banjo with a long handle on it. They had all the music that they could get together and told everybody that at the sound of these things, that they must fall down and worship the image; and if they wouldn't, they would be cast into the fiery furnace.

All this just goes to show how human pride will go to seed if you will give it a chance. I don't have any idea that this old king, Nebuchadnezzar, had in mind when he started out with this golden image that he would make people worship it, but the prettier it got, the prouder he became, and the more he thought about makin' all bow down to it. So, he wound up by orderin' everybody to do it, and for fear some wouldn't, he made up his mind to threaten to burn them to death if they didn't.

The strangest thing about it is, that practically everybody fell down and worshipped the image! Of course, they didn't mean all this worship; they were scared to do otherwise. I have always thought that what you make people do doesn't do them any good anyhow. If he had reasoned with them and showed them why it would do them good, people might have done it in sincerity, but they bowed down, not because they loved that image nor loved the king, but they didn't want to get scorched in that fiery furnace. A fire like that will make a lot of people bow down, anytime, anywhere!

But, there was one group that didn't bow down, those three Hebrew children that had been brought out from Jerusalem with Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They just decided that they wouldn't do it. There are always people who will be tattle-tales, so a lot of those envious Chaldeans came near and saw that these three fellows weren't bowin' down, so they went and told the old king, and it made him as mad as he could be. He sent for the Hebrew children. And in the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of Daniel, it tells about these three fellows goin' in before the king. They said something that always

did strike my attention. They didn't seem to care much. They said, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter." It didn't make any difference to them what he thought; they had made up their minds to pay the price, whatever the cost.

You know, when you have fellows like that, you can burn them, but you don't really burn the man on the inside. Somehow or other, you can't change his mind. They've been tryin' that all through the ages; they've burned fellows at the stake; they've fed them to lions; they've persecuted them, but no, it didn't seem to work. In fact, some smart fellow said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.

In the seventeenth verse, it tells us what Shadrach, Meshrach, and Abednego said: "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy god, nor worship the golden image which thou has set up."

My, what a sentence! "If not." That always stirs my blood to read this. They made up their minds that if God didn't deliver them, they would go on servin' Him just the same, and if He wanted them to die in the fiery furnace, they were willin' to go.

Neighbors, it's been people like these who have spread the faith across the years and brought down to us today everything that's worthwhile as far as religion is concerned. It was people like these who crossed the plains and laid the foundations of the Christian life that we have today; the same crowd crossed the ocean and brought it to the barren coast of New England and up and down the Atlantic sea-coast. It has been these "if not" fellows who have died on every battle field! They have died for things that were worthwhile. Oh, if we could just build our lives today on an "if not" kind of faith! If we could say, "I'll serve the Lord, expectin' Him to bless me and prosper me, but *if not*, I'll serve Him just the same! I'll serve the Lord if it pays; *if not*, I'll go right on!"

Naturally, that made the king mad, so he told them to heat the furnace seven times hotter than it had ever been heated. But the funniest thing about it is that it burned the fellows who took these three Hebrew children to the furnace! Yes, it burned them to death! It must have been hot! Then, they threw the three Hebrews into the fiery furnace anyhow, and the only thing that was burned about them were the ropes that bound them! That's the way it is when we go through fiery furnace experiences; it just burns off the fetters for this "if not" crowd and sets them free.

In the twenty-fourth verse there's a strange incident told. Nebuchadnezzar, when he heard that the fire wasn't hurtin' these fellows, that their bonds were burned off, said, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered, "True, O king." I would have loved to have seen his face when he said, "Well, what's that fourth one doin' in there, walking in the midst of the fire?" He went on to say, "The fourth looks like he might be the Son of God."

I wonder where Nebuchadnezzar got the idea that the fourth man was the Son of God? Do you reckon that it was from something that he had heard Daniel say? Well, anyway, he said it; there it is in the twenty-fifth verse of the third chapter of Daniel, away back yonder, six hundred years before Christ was born. Sorta funny, isn't it? No wonder the twenty-sixth verse says that the old king walked up to the mouth of the fiery furnace and called to these three Hebrew children sayin', "Come forth and come hither." That was a funny way to say it, wasn't it? Well, he meant, "Come out and then come here to me." They came out of the midst of the fire of the furnace, and it says that there wasn't any smell of fire on their clothes in any way. It was well witnessed by a big crowd, and they all commented on the fact that their clothes weren't scorched, nor a hair of their heads singed, nor did they have the smell of fire upon them.

Folks, it's just like that all the time. When we've got

the faith to go through with God, He'll take care of us. God has left stories like this, witnessed by lots of people, so they can be passed down to us who have to go through fiery furnaces, and not be afraid. If the Son of God on the other side of Calvary walked through that fiery furnace with those three young men, surely, you'll find Him walkin' by your side on this side of the cross whenever you have to go through the valley of fire and trial!

Well, the old king acted just the same. He made another decree, told everybody, every people, every nation, and every language that if they spoke anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that he'd see they were cut to pieces and their houses torn down, because there's no other God that can deliver after this sort. Did you notice that he did something nice for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, but he didn't seem to pay much attention to the Lord? He promoted the three Hebrew children in the province of Babylon, but forgot God and went right on in his follies. Isn't that just like people today? They'll give money to the church; they'll love the preacher; they'll listen to his preachin'; but, they'll close their hearts to the God who is in it all.

## A Talk on the Fourth Chapter of Daniel

This fourth chapter of Daniel is most unusual. It bears on the face of it that it was a state document from the Empire of Babylon. Daniel, very probably, took this all down from the records to which he had access in the capital city of the world's greatest empire. Sarah was tellin' me the other night that as far as she could find out, this is the only authentic document from ancient nations that we have in the world today. Nebuchadnezzar evidently wrote this after the spell had come upon him as foretold by Daniel in the interpretation of the dream.

The first verse gives us some idea of the extent of the Babylonian Empire where Nebuchadnezzar, speakin' of himself, says that he's the king of all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in the earth. So, we might be sure that most of the known world at that time was ruled over by this great king. He had a lot of reasons to be proud. He had done much for the city of Babylon. Up until his time, the city was just on one side of the Euphrates River. He spread it over on the other side, and he did a sight of things throughout that country.

Sarah was tellin' me that she read the other day where some fellow named Rawlinson says that Mesopotamia, that is, the country between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers, is really covered with the ruins of the glory of Nebuchadnezzar. This man, Rawlinson, goes on to say that he found little bricks all over that country bearin' the name of Nebuchadnezzar. The old king wrote his name not only across the bricks, but across the world, and as I was sayin', he had a right smart reason to be proud.

Do you notice that this king says here in the first verse of the fourth chapter, "Peace be multiplied unto you." That sounds sorta like one of the apostles in the New Testament. This leads us to wonder if Nebuchadnezzar had really been born again on account of all the trouble he passed through.

There's been a whole lot of argument among preachers about this. Here's my idea: none of us know what goes on in the human heart, and this question of a fellow bein' saved and bein' lost is a matter that the Lord has to settle Himself. Isn't it a fine thing that public opinion or private opinion can't save or damn a man? If it could, whenever anybody got mad at a feller, or whenever some fellow was accused of something of which he wasn't guilty, the people could send him to hell and that would end it; but I thank God that the Bible tells us that the Lord looketh on the heart. Each man will stand or fall accordin' to the records that God has and what the Lord thinks about it. Also, there are people so narrow in their Bible interpretation that they would send everybody to perdition who didn't believe just like they believed. I thank the Lord that their power stops in this world, and when we get into the next one, we'll find out that the Lord's goin' to handle that Himself.

I wouldn't say that this man, Nebuchadnezzar, was saved or lost, that's none of my business. You see, I have never been commissioned by the Lord to tell men whether they are saved or lost no more than I have been told to change the Bible. Whatever orders I've ever had from the Lord to my heart have been along this line, for me to do the best I could with what I had, sow the seed, and let it fall where it may. If it does good, that's fine; if it doesn't, the Lord won't hold me accountable.

I was tellin' somebody the other day, when he asked me what holiness is, that, as far as I could see, holiness is livin' up to whatever light you have. I have often thought that the people who really do get to heaven are goin' to have three surprises, and they're goin' to come so fast that it's goin' to make them dizzy. The first surprise is that they're goin' to see a lot of people in Heaven whom they never thought would be there; then, they're goin' to find a lot absent whom they thought sure were goin' to be there; and there will be many surprised to find themselves there!

While we are talkin' about these words here that the

king said, "Peace be multiplied unto you," let me just add this: it is sorta funny that the last picture that the Bible gives us of this king, Nebuchadnezzar, is in his favor. This is a mighty good talk that he makes here in the fourth chapter of Daniel. It's a sight better than what a lot of big fellows would have said who strutted across the world, carried big sticks, knocked people in the head, and called themselves conquerors, and it does look like he had a change of heart. It looks like he was sorry for bein' such a fool and actin' so pig-headed, and he winds up by tellin' everybody to serve the Lord. If a fellow would do that today, it would be a right good sign that something had really happened to him spiritually. But, I'm willin' to do what the Lord has done, just drop the curtain on this man's future, leavin' it in the hands of Him who knows the human heart and will give every man a square deal. Some man handed me a right pretty piece that I thought I would put in here:

"In men whom men pronounce as ill,
I find so much of goodness still;
In men whom men pronounce divine,
I find so much of sin and blot;
I hesitate to draw the line between the two
When God does not."

The fourth verse tells us in the words of Nebuchadnezzar himself that he was at rest in his house and flourishin' in his palace. He evidently meant that he didn't have any wars goin' on when he said that he was at rest, 'cause the very fact that he was restless, troubled in his sleep, and was spendin' a sleepless night shows that he wasn't at rest with himself.

After all, neighbors, it's not the battle that we fight on the outside that gets us down, it's the battle that is goin' on in ourselves. A man who is whipped on the inside is a coward. He may bluster around and make out like he is a winner and all of that, but he has a white flag up on the inside, and it won't be long till there'll be a white flag

up everywhere. Then, on the other hand, when a man is at rest with himself, knowin' his own motives, why, you can abuse that kind of a man, beat him to death, even starve him to death, but he's never whipped! Remember, neighbors, no man is ever defeated till he admits it in the throne-room of his own heart.

Notice, too, that although Nebuchadnezzar was flourishin' in his palace, he was starvin' in his soul. The kind of a house a fellow is livin' in, the clothes he wears, and all the outside signs of success are no means by which you can get the real value of the man. You have to take into account the condition of the inside of a man, his mind, whether he's at peace with himself or not, before you can strike a true balance on any person.

Yes, everything was fine on the outside: no wars, the palace was beautiful, he was the greatest king of his time, and many think of all time, yet he couldn't sleep at night. It says that he had a dream which made him afraid. Yes, some fellow said, "And thus it is that conscience doth make cowards of us all." A man can bluff through the day, strut around and show off his good clothes, drive his fine team and spend his money, but when he lies down at night, blows out the lamp, and is left alone with his own soul, if he can't have peace then, something is bound to be wrong.

I remember one poor boy who was dyin' one night in a hospital in France called me to him and said, "Sky Pilot, I could make it all right out there in No Man's Land with men all around me, even though the machine gun bullets were singin' on the left and right, and the heavens above were blasted and burned with smoke and shell, but this thing of bein' alone with your own soul, facin' eternity—it gets me down."

Yes, that little old soldier that night, alone there on a bunk, gives us a pretty good chance to glimpse what goes on in still, quiet times when the tumult and the shoutin' dies. Nobody in all the Kingdom of Babylon, unless it was perhaps the four Hebrew children, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and maybe some other good

spiritual people, had any idea that the king was restless. The fanfare of trumpets and the pageantry of an oriental court dropped like a veil between this starved and restless monarch and the people who envied and applauded him.

Verse five says, "I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me." Yes, it's these dreams of what is goin' to come, if we keep on in the path that we are travelin', and the thought about whom that will effect and the agony of our own heart that trouble us. It's enough to make a man scared!

Sarah was readin' me a piece the other night in front of the fire-place from some science book of hers where it says that a body once set in motion will move forever in a straight line unless acted on by some external force. I said to Sarah, "That sure is the truth! Now, you take Lazarus. He was livin' on a certain line, and he died bein' on the same line, and it took him up to the bosom of Abraham. That fellow, Dives, was livin' a life that was turned down. He left here goin' down, and he kept on a-goin' down till he wound up in the place we are told about in Luke where he says, "I am tormented in this flame." Yes, everyone of us is travelin' on a certain path. No wonder that sometimes we have fears about what is around the bend of the road on that path! We can judge by what other fellows have found around there, and what they had to go through with.

God gave this old king a picture of what was comin', and it scared him. The sixth verse tells us that he went right back to his old habits of lookin' to the wise men of Babylon to explain everything. I have often wondered why Nebuchadnezzar didn't fall down on his knees and do some long distance talkin' himself. God would have answered him just as quickly as He answered Daniel, if Nebuchadnezzar had come to Him in the right way. But, no, he was goin' to do just like everybody else had done, he was goin' to call in the astrologers, the soothsayers, the magicians, and the Chaldeans to see what they could do about it.

Somebody was askin' me the other day why they had so many dreams in Daniel. Well, I said that I thought the Lord spoke to them in dreams there, because they wouldn't listen to Daniel, and they wouldn't pay much attention to the spiritually minded people, so about the only way God could get to them was when they were still at night. He would draw back the curtains of the mind, flash on the canvas warnin's, messages, and scenes that were to be.

When I read about Nebuchadnezzar's troubled sleep, I think about our children when they were little babies, how Sarah and I used to watch them in their sleep, smilin' and laughin'. A dear old colored sister told us once that the thing that made little babies smile was the angels whisperin' to them about pretty things in Heaven. What a long stretch of thought from the smile on a baby's face to the look of fear on the face of this Babylonian monarch! How the old king's soul must have been torn up when he stood before all these wise men of Babylon, told them about his dream, and asked them if they couldn't explain it to him or help him to do something about it. Isn't it funny that a man is always tryin' to get somebody else to do something about a matter when, generally, he's the only one that really can change things? It wasn't a bit of use for Nebuchadnezzar to call in all these fellers. If he would have just fallen on his knees by the side of his bed and had asked God to forgive him, he would have gone back to bed and slept as peacefully as a little child. But, no, he was goin' to put it off just as long as he could! He didn't have to wait long!

You notice that Daniel didn't come in with the first crowd of fellows who went before the king. His idea was to let them go ahead and have their say and realize their failure, then, he would come in with the wisdom that the Lord gave him and interpret the old king's dream.

In the eighth verse, Nebuchadnezzar is still talkin'. He calls Daniel "Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god." That's what I told you, a little earlier in this piece, that they named him Belteshazzar so they could try to tie

him up with Bel, who was a big heathen god there in Babylon. Fastenin' that name on him didn't seem to change Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar certainly paid Daniel a compliment when he spoke this tribute of him, "In whom is the spirit of the holy gods." It means a great deal when an old pagan king like Nebuchadnezzar pays a compliment like that. I have often heard people say that environment kept them from bein' a Christian. Well, that isn't so. Daniel was carried to Babylon when he was about twenty years old, and it was the most wicked city, perhaps, that the world has ever known. He came out of it, however, like the Hebrew children came out of the fiery furnace, without the smell of Babylon on his life. It just goes to show that it's not where you are, it's what you are that counts.

You can see what kind of a religious trainin' this old king had from this sentence, "In whom is the spirit of the holy gods." In the Bible it's spelled with a little "g" and has an "s" on it. Yes, everything, nearly, was a god in Babylon; there were gods of lust, gods of peace, gods of war, gods of hate, good gods, bad gods. Oh, they had a whole mess of gods! It says over there in the next chapter that another king of Babylon, Belshazzar, had gods of gold, brass, iron, wood, and stone.

I was just thinkin' to myself that everybody has gods unless he worships the one true God. There's no such thing as a man not havin' a god. Whatever he bows down before and pays homage to, that's his god. Some fellow was tellin' me about a man who boasted of the fact that he was an atheist, sayin' he didn't believe in any god. He said he was a self-made man. The fellow said to him, "Well, you're a self-made man, and you worship your maker." Of course, that meant that the fellow worshipped himself. His own self was his god.

Nebuchadnezzar went on to tell about the dream that he had. He said he saw a tree in the midst of the earth, and it was of great height and strong and reached up to Heaven, and folks could see the tree from all over the

world. He went on to say that the leaves were very fair, and there was a lot of fruit on it, and there was meat for everybody. The beasts of the field had shadow under it; the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed by this tree. But, there was a very peculiar somebody above that tree whom Nebuchadnezzar called a "watcher." He came down from Heaven. Now, just who this watcher and holy one was, we don't know; but somebody out of the heavenly hierarchy came down to give this warnin' to Nebuchadnezzar.

Yes, neighbors, there's an Umpire in the game of life. People live as tho' they think this world is all there is, but God sees what's goin' on. He can send somebody down from up there to look after and straighten out matters whenever He wants to. In fact, I think He will finally send Somebody from up there who will straighten out the whole business, and I think it will be the Lord Himself.

In verse fourteen, the watcher says, "Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. This matter is by the decrees of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones."

No wonder that troubled Nebuchadnezzar! You see, they put a lot of faith in dreams in those days. When that big tree that grew up there and had so much fruit, was cut down, with its fruit scattered, it was what one of our colored friends over at the Who'd-a-thought-it Church called "sorta disencouragin' ".

Nebuchadnezzar, in this article that he left for the court of Babylon, said that Daniel was kinda upset for about an hour, and his thoughts troubled him. I imagine

Daniel was troubled! You see, he was in a tight place when the Lord told him what the dream meant, and he had to take about an hour to think it over, decidin' whether he was willin' to pay the price of telling Nebuchadnezzar the truth. It's kinda hard on a preacher to get up and look a man in the eye who pays a lot of his salary, and tell him that he's a sinner and tell him that he's goin' to be lost. It would take more than an hour for some fellows to make up their minds to do what Daniel did! The fact of the business is that it has taken some people so long that they haven't done it yet!

I can't help but laugh when I read here what the old king said to Daniel, "Don't let the dream trouble you, Daniel."

Daniel never said much, but I can imagine him thinkin', "It isn't the dream that's troublin' me, but it's what you are goin' to do when I tell you about it." So, Daniel let him have it, and here's what he said:

Of course, Daniel kinda put a pad on it so it wouldn't hurt so bad. He said, "My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee." You see, what Daniel meant by that was that this ought to happen to some of the king's enemies rather than to him. Daniel went on to tell him that the tree which was so full of fruit, that had done so much good throughout the world, had helped so many people, and fed so many, was the king himself. Of course, if the tree was the king, then, the heavenly watcher served warnin' on the king that he was goin' to be cut down, just as the tree was.

Did you ever notice, neighbors, that the heavenly watcher said to leave the stump in the ground? Thank God for that second chance! After God knocked him down and put this punishment on him for seven years, He was goin' to give him another chance, but did you notice from where that other chance came? He had to look to the "dew of heaven" for a chance to come again. My, my, what a thought! There are many who will read this piece who have been punished for pride and other forms of sin, and when God gives them another chance to come

back, he's goin' to give it to them on two conditions: He will have to keep them from bein' so big that they'll have to be cut down (that's what that iron band meant around Nebuchadnezzar); the other condition is trustin' God just like the stump of that tree would have to depend on the dew of heaven to ever sprout again. There's hope for everybody who is down, if he is willin' to come back God's way; the grace of God will give anybody another chance in this world on these conditions.

Daniel told the king that he was to be driven from men, he was goin' to live with the wild animals, goin' to eat grass like oxen, and that he would have to go through seven years of it, maybe longer. He was to endure it until he knew "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will." Then, Daniel went on and preached him a sermon. He said, "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility." Now, neighbors, this means to me that God was givin' him the chance to escape the whole business, if he would just break off his sins, be good to the poor, and God would give him tranquility or peace of mind. But, no, sir, he was too head-strong! He went right on livin' like he had been livin' and doin' just like he had been doin' till the lightin' struck him.

Verse twenty-eight says, "All this came upon the king, Nebuchadnezzar." Isn't that an awful thought? There's just no way of tellin' how much misery and sufferin', disgrace and tragedy this old world would have missed had men taken God's warnin' and cut off their sins and lived accordin' to the Lord's will. But, no, it's the same old story. There is someone, perhaps, who reads these lines to whom God has sent this little message, but he will not listen to it, he'll go right on just like Nebuchadnezzar did! There's nothin' can be done about it. Just like I've been tellin' you, like Daniel said over there, the only one that that could defeat Nebuchadnezzar was the old king himself. The only one who can bring defeat upon you is your-

self, and whenever any of us is ready to take the Lord's plan, He's ready to turn over all the resources of Heaven for our use and enjoyment.

It tells us in the twenty-ninth verse that about a year passed before the bolt struck Nebuchadnezzar. It's interestin' to notice how it hit him. He was walkin' in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon, struttin' around, braggin' about what he had done, and enjoyin' the glory that he had created in the capital of the world. Nebuchadnezzar writes what he was sayin' at the time, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" If there ever was a man who had a right to brag, it was this king, Nebuchadnezzar. If he had added just one thing, I think he would have escaped his punishment, if he had only given God the credit for all the glory that was his.

It's sorta like the day I was holdin' the calf for my mother. I was a boy, eatin' a stalk of sugar cane. I had a rope around the calf's neck and a slip-noose at the other end of the rope. I very foolishly slipped the noose over my arm so I could eat the sugar cane. Well, a piece of paper blew up and wrapped around the calf's head. As you may or may not know, calves are funny about things bein' wrapped around their heads, and away he went across the corn field, carryin' me with him. They had cut the corn stalks down, and the corn field was something like a cocoanut grater. Also, there were some stumps down in the corner, and he headed right toward those stumps, and I couldn't do a thing in the world about it—he had me off my feet. When we came to the stumps, he went on one side of one, and I went on the other, and we kinda wrapped around it. When he got himself all fastened up, I jumped loose and got away, and he just kept a-runnin' and bellowin', and I said to myself, "Just let him go, he'll wrap himself up around that stump." It wasn't long before he had his head right up against the stump, and he bellowed, and he bellowed! I said, "All right, you got yourself into it, now just stay there and think it over awhile."

Everytime I read about this big king, I think about that calf. Nothin' would do him, but he had to cavort and run around and, then, wind up with his head against the stump. That's just what happened to Nebuchadnezzar. The Bible tells us while these words of pride and boastin' were in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven sayin' to Nebuchadnezzar that God was goin' to take the kingdom away from him, and that he was goin' to be driven from men; he would live among the wild beasts and eat grass just like the oxen. There wasn't a thing in the world he could do about it. Whenever the thunder bolt falls from heaven, neighbors, there's nothin' you can do but grin and bear it.

Well, he must have been a sight! It tells us in the thirty-third verse how he looked. The very minute that voice sounded, the punishment fell, and he went wild. He lay around just like the cattle. His body was wet with the dew of heaven. It said his hair looked like eagles' feathers, and his finger nails looked like birds' claws. Don't you know he was a horrible lookin' sight? Yet, he did it all himself. Daniel couldn't tell him anything; none of the other wise men could tell him anything; the holy watchers who came down from heaven couldn't tell him anything; God couldn't tell him anything; nothin' to do for a fellow like that but just let him go on and get his. As Jeff Batts here in the neighborhood says, whenever anybody is goin' ahead and you can't stop them, he says, "All right, let him go on, he'll get his'n". Well, Nebuchadnezzar got his'n.

Did you ever notice in the thirty-fourth verse that the very minute that Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes to heaven, that his mind came back, and he blessed the Most High? Yes, you see, he had been out of his head for about seven years. I believe that almost anytime in that whole period, if he had lifted up his poor weak mind to God and confessed his sin, God would have taken this mental trouble from him.

Wasn't that a terrible punishment he had? He had

lived completely by the physical: eatin', drinkin', and exercisin' his strength to beat down the little fellows; so God just let him have the physical, let him be a beast. I think the Lord has a way of doin' that. When a fellow is just set and determ'd to do a certain way, the Lord just takes His hand off and lets the fellow have the lines until he gets sick of it. The trouble is that some people never get sick of it; they die that way.

Well, we thank the Lord that Nebuchadnezzar came to his senses and began to praise God for another chance to come back right. He says that his reason returned to him. When he got to where God wanted him, the glory of the kingdom was given back to him, and his friends all came back. It says there in the thirty-sixth verse, "My counsellors and my lords sought unto me: and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me." Whenever we get right with God, everything else is right!

It's pretty the way the chapter ends in the thirty-seventh verse. The last glimpse that we get of this old king with all the foolish things that he had done and all the dreams that he dreamed and all that came to him, the last glimpse that we have of him is to see him wavin' to us and pointin' up to heaven, sayin', "Now I, Nebuchadnezzer, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride, he is able to abase."

It seems that a document like this left to us in God's Book, would have meant a lot to the kings, big men, and even the little men down through the ages, but, no, many won't even read it! Some of those who do, pay no attention in the world to it and go right on with the warnin' flashin' in their faces. Think of a sermon from the king of Babylon! If there ever was a sermon, this fourth chapter of Daniel is one. I pass it on to you today with a humble prayer from Goose Creek that God will write this message in your own heart.

## A Talk on the Fifth Chapter of Daniel

Neighbors, before we get into studyin' this fifth chapter of Daniel, I think I will give you some facts and figures and dates and things like that that Sarah gave me. Of course, it might help some, but you can't depend on everything you read in books. I just take the Bible as far as I'm concerned. Some of you may want to put a little book learnin' by the side of this and find out what happened between the time when Nebuchadnezzar was king and the reign of Belshazzar.

When Nebuchadnezzar died, five hundred and sixty-one years before Christ, his son, Evil-merodach, became king. The first thing he did was to turn Jehoiakin, king of Judah, out of prison and let him eat at his own table. Sarah says she found that in Second Kings, the twenty-fifth chapter, verses twenty-seven and thirty; and in Jeremiah fifty-two: verses thirty-one to thirty-four. Then a bunch of fellows got together after two years and killed this Evil-merodach. Sarah says that his brother-in-law, Neriglisser, was at the bottom of the insurrection. He became king and reigned about four years but was killed fightin' in a battle five hundred and fifty-six years before Christ. Now, this fellow, Neriglisser, had a boy named Laborosoarchod, who was a kind of a half-wit, and he was king for about a year; however, he was beaten to death, and a fellow by the name of Nabonidus took over the whole business. This fellow was the son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar. Accordin' to the history books, Nabonidus was the king of Babylon when it was destroyed in 538 B.C.

A lot of smart fellows have found fault with Daniel's story, because Daniel says that Belshazzer was the last king of Babylon. But, Sarah was tellin' me about a funny thing that happened. They dug up some of these old tablets, bricks, and things, and found out that Belshazzar was the king in Babylon when it was taken over, and that

he ruled in connection with Nabonidus. Of course, Daniel's statement was proven as far as I was concerned, but it's nice to see these old clay tablets bearin' out the same things that Daniel said.

Now, Belshazzar was a grand-son of Nebuchadnezzar. This is brought out in Jeremiah, the twenty-seventh chapter, and seventh verse in which Jeremiah foretold what was goin' to happen in these words, "All nations shall serve him (that was Nebuchadnezzar), and his son and his son's son until the very time of his land come." It's kinda funny again that Jeremiah could tell all this in such great detail a long time before it happened. The reason Belshazzar is called the "son" of Nebuchadnezzar in the Bible is because there was no word for "grandson", or "grandfather."

Twenty-three years have passed since Nebuchadnezzar died, and, now, this dissolute young Belshazzar, the grand-son of Nebuchadnezzar, is puttin' on one of the most wicked and, at the same time, one of the greatest feasts that is told about in the Bible. Of course, over in the book of Esther, we are told about a feast given by Ahasuerus, king of Persia, to the princes of the hundred and twenty provinces of his kingdom. This was in Shushan the palace in 521 B. C. Now, the city of Babylon was bein' besieged by the armies of the Medes and Persians, but Belshazzar didn't pay any attention to that, because there was a stream of water all around this high wall of Babylon, and the bridges had all been lifted up so that nobody could come across. Belshazzar knew that his soldiers on the wall would be able to keep off the enemies, and Belshazzar had been smart enough to put up enough provisions for many years; also, we know that inside of these walls there were grounds that could be ploughed and cultivated so that food could be raised. It looks kinda like this fellow, Belshazzar, put this banquet on just to show the Medes and the Persians that he wasn't payin' any attention to them.

Then, it goes on to say in this fifth chapter that while he tasted the wine, Belshazzar ordered the servants to

bring out the golden and the silver vessels which his father, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, so that he and the thousand lords could drink out of them. It looks like Belshazzar wanted to show his disregard for the enemy and also for the God above him by profanin' these sacred vessels which used to be in the temple in Jerusalem. Twice in this chapter we are told that these vessels were taken out of the house of God which was at Jerusalem, in both the second and third verses; this was one of the particularly wicked things that Belshazzar did.

Over in Ezra, the first chapter, verses seven to eleven, you'll find a list of the things that Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple in Jerusalem. It says that there were "thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the capitivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem."

Notice that Belshazzar did this when he was drunk; his reason had been dethroned, and while he tasted of the wine, a disregard for religious association came over him, and in his impious bravado, he flung a challenge into the face of God. Bible students know that these vessels for generations had been associated with the sacrificin', all of which pointed to Calvary. These very vessels, doubtless, had been used in the blood sacrifices at the altar in the temple at Jerusalem.

Neighbors, it's a terrible thing when a man gets to where he has no regard for spiritual associations. There's many a man and woman who is cold and irreligious, but deep down in the heart, there is a holy reverence for things that are sacred. Whenever a person gets on sacrilegious ground, he is courtin' disaster.

We are told in the third verse that the vessels were brought out, and the king and his princes, his wives and

his concubines, drank in them. What a mad mob of wine-crazed idolaters lolled around the table in Belshazzar's banquet hall! Little did they know that the Medes and Persians were at that moment divertin' the Euphrates River into another channel, so that the soldiers could walk on the dry beds under the gates in the wall.

But, these thoughtless libertines went too far. Verse four tells us how they praised the gods of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. It doesn't take much imagination for a fellow to figure out about what they said. It must have been something like this, "We don't have to pay any attention to this Daniel and his God. We worship the gods that really render service to us, gods of gold, gold that makes us wealthy; gods of brass, brass that serves us as vessels and ornaments; gods of iron, iron that we can make into tools and utensils; wood that is valuable and useful in our buildin'; stone with which we build our temples. These are our gods!" Then, they evidently figured that the stone, iron, and wood in their walls and gates, and their weapons would keep off their besiegers, but they sure were wrong!

Neighbors, it was the same old materialistic philosophy that teaches us that the spiritual is just a matter of a man's fancy or imagination, that the real worthwhile things are those that administer to you in physical pleasure or in a useful way for a worldly program. What a fool Belshazzar was!

The fifth verse tells us, "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candle stick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." Notice, it was the same hour; punishment is not slow in catchin' up with those who ridicule the God of heaven.

Don't you know there was excitement in that room? These wives, princes, concubines, and the king himself were paralyzed as the plaster began to crumble and the fingers of the hand of doom wrote the mystical letters over by the candlesticks in the king's palace. I can hear that

king sayin' to some of his guards, "Go up on the roof and put to death the man that is daring to break open the ceiling and interrupt our banquet!" The guards returned to tell him that there was no one on the roof, but still the hand wrote. Consternation filled that banquet hall. Tables were overturned, the sacred vessels fell, wine was splashed, while the screams of women and the blanched faces of men added terror to the scene.

It tells us that the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. There wasn't any doubt about it, he saw it with his own eyes. He watched those fingers movin', writin' his doom and the doom of his kingdom. You know, neighbors, I believe that some such hand writes often whether the writin' is visible to any eyes or not. On the records of time that movin' finger writes the doom of everything that leaves out God. We are told here that the king's countenance was changed. His face was blanched with terror, his thoughts troubled him. No wonder! It goes on to say that he was so scared that "the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." That was enough to make anybody's teeth chatter and knees pop together, to see a mysterious hand writin' over and over those cryptic words. Belshazzar is not the last man who has read the writin' on the wall! I've seen them turn white and have nothing to say. There's no use talkin', a man just can't live in God's world and forget God and get away with it. Lots of people go on, and nobody ever knows about what was written upon the walls of their consciences, but I believe the writin' is always put there, and they see it.

Verse seven tells us that Belshazzar was like the rest of those kings back there, he had to get paid fellows to solve the problem for him. He asked the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers (the wise men), to tell him what to do about it, but the fellows who were supposed to talk to the dead, read the the future by the stars, those smart Chaldeans who worked out their philosophy with scientific data, couldn't do a thing in the world about ex-

plainin' where that hand came from, and they didn't even understand what the hand wrote. It just kept writin', "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN."

It was enough to run Belshazzar crazy! It's a wonder he didn't go ravin' mad. He cried out and said, "Whoever shall read this writin' and show me the interpretation thereof shall be clothed with scarlet, and shall have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." I tell you, that was an offer that would bring the wise men out! But, they all just sat there and looked. I doubt if anybody could sit, so I suppose they stood and looked, each one with his hat in his hand, right by an open door, and still the hand wrote, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." I imagine you could hear those smart fellows swallowin' all over that room. It's enough to scare anybody. To tell you the honest truth, if I couldn't have had the help of God to understand it, you never would have caught me foolin' around that room with that hand writin' on the plaster, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." I guess I was just raised too far down South where they've got too many superstitions! I just couldn't have stood it. Of course, my mind would have been willin', but my flesh would have been mighty weak.

But, with all these gold chains offered them to put on their necks, along with scarlet clothes, and the honor of bein' the third ruler in the kingdom, it looks like these things would have made them take a pass at it, but, no, sir, not a one of these astrologers, Chaldeans, soothsayers dared to open his mouth. A fellow just doesn't feel like foolin' around and makin' guesses when there's a hand that you can't understand writin' a mysterious message on the wall, just writin' it over and over and over again. I'll tell you, brother, when a king like Belshazzar has his jaws loose, his knees poppin' together, his face as white as chalk from terror, why, a fellow don't feel like makin' any guesses!

Verse ten has always interested me. The queen heard

about this commotion, so she came into the banquet hall. What always has bothered me is why she wasn't there in the first place. That's what Belshazzar and all these men and women got for puttin' on a big dinner like that without havin' their wives there. He might have had some of his wives in the banquet hall, but the main one, the one who knew him and knew how to handle him, and very likely, the one he really loved, who in this day and time would be his lawful wife, was left at home with the children.

However, he sure sent for her when the trouble began to come. Isn't that just like a man! He can cavort around, do all kinds of foolish things, but when he gets into trouble, he generally sends for his wife. By the way, next to the Lord, she's about the best help he's got.

It tickles me the way the queen came in sayin', "O, king, live forever." She might have said that, but I'll guarantee you that she was the boss around that place, because he sent for her; he figured that even if these astrologers, soothsayers, and Chaldeans fell down on the job, his wife could handle it. There's a whole lot written between the lines givin' us an idea about how much he depended upon his wife. You notice, she says, "Let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed." It worried her to see her husband lookin' like that. No woman likes to see her husband in trouble. Every good woman will go her length to get him out of it. This woman had a right smart amount of sense, too, because she was the only one who knew for whom to send. Isn't that just like a good woman? While the men all carried on and hollered around, turnin' over tables and things, and the king's knees were poppin' together, she told him what to do. You can't fool me, I believe that wife of Belshazzar' was a pretty good kind of a woman. She knew where the man of God was; she knew that what this old king needed all the time was to listen to Daniel. There are several women in the Bible who stand out right along this line. Pilate's wife had a heavenly visitation of some

sort, and it made her tell her husband not to have a thing in the world to do with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. If Pilate had listened to his wife, his reputation would have been better, and God only knows what a difference it would have made. I have an idea that Belshazzar's wife had tried again and again to get him to listen to Daniel's advice. No, he knew what he was doin', but in this time of need, like men always do when they get in trouble, he sent for the preacher, but in this case, it was too late.

Verse eleven tells us what the queen thought about Daniel: "There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams and shewing of hard sentenances, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation."

Now, what bothers me is where Daniel had been since Nebuchadnezzar passed out of the picture in the last chapter? It is just another one of those cases where a great man was not honored among the people that knew him. However, such a man should not worry; when the time of crisis comes, he will be the man of the hour. It's the same old story; it's been told over and over again. People won't go to the folks who are really expected to have the information that they desire. Just like it is today, a lot of people won't go to hear their preacher. They'll pay him and support him and wish him well, but when it comes to hearin' him, a lot won't do that; if they ever do listen to him, they won't do what he says do.

It's all sorta like a fellow I knew once who got drunk and went to church without realizin' where he was. The preacher was very much pleased at seein' this prominent lawyer sittin' on the front seat. He noticed that the law-

yer looked a little stupid, so the preacher decided to call at his office the next day and inquire why this distinguished man had come to church, to try to follow it up and help the poor fellow lead a better life.

The preacher called on the lawyer the next mornin', and the attorney was very much surprised to find this very much beloved and popular preacher there in his office on Monday mornin'. He said, "Why, Doctor, I wonder what's bringin' you to my office this mornin'?"

The preacher said, "I just wanted to thank you for comin' to church yesterday, and let you know that I appreciated it. You sat in my church on the front seat yesterday all through the service, and it certainly did encourage me."

The lawyer said, "And, so, that's where I was yesterday!"

Well, I guess that kinda got the preacher down a little, but there are a lot of people who feel the same way about goin' to church, and when they do go, they don't listen much to what the preacher is sayin'. That's the way it was here in Babylon. They had these fellows who were set apart for this one business, to solve problems, and they knew that Daniel was at the head of them, and that he had been able to do some wonderful things in helpin' out the grandfather of Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar. But, no, this grandson wouldn't send for him. By the way, the record speaks of Belshazzar here as the son of Nebuchadnezzar; in the language and the customs of the time, they considered grandsons as sons even adopted sons as sons. I think the truth of the whole business is that, accordin' to the history as Sarah has read it, Belshazzar was really a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, having been adopted by this man, Nabonidus, who was rulin' Babylon along with his adopted son, Belshazzar. Naturally, they would refer to Belshazzar as the son of Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse thirteen tells us that Daniel was brought in before the king. It's interestin' to notice the question that the king asked Daniel. He said, "Art thou that Daniel,

which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king, my father brought out of Jewry? I have heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee."

That was a nice compliment comin' even from a dissolute and drunken king like Belshazzar. Have you noticed, neighbors, that it makes no difference how low a fellow sinks, if he'll be honest with himself, he knows goodness when he sees it. There's many a poor preacher today who doesn't have much of this world's goods and doesn't get to preach to many people, but deep down in the hearts of even the Godless folks there is a lot of respect for this blessed man.

Belshazzar repeated his offer of fine clothes, a chain of gold around his neck, and a promise that he would be the third ruler in the kingdom, if he could explain that writin'.

The first reply of Daniel was to cast aside any offers or bribes, sayin' to Belshazzar, "Give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation." You see, he didn't want to be under obligation to the king, because God told him what this message was, and he knew that it was goin' to be pretty hard on the old king when he told him.

My, what a sermon he preached to Belshazzar! Daniel knew a lot of things that had been goin' on there in Babylon. It had been twenty-three years since Nebuchadnezzar had died, and Daniel hadn't had much chance to get close to this new fellow and the other men who had been rulin' durin' the meanwhile, and Daniel, God's exiled but blessed mouth piece of Babylon, had been ignored and all but forgotten.

He said, "O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor: And, for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would

he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this."

Isn't that a sermon! It does look like Belshazzar would have profited by his old grandfather's experience. Every son knows what happened to his father and grandfather and other fellows' fathers and grandfathers; we see the harvest of wrong livin' all around. We see the result of hard-headedness and of turnin' the back on God, but folks go right on and pay the price. So, before Daniel explained the meanin' of the mysterious words, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN", he took the opportunity to preach one sermon to Belshazzar!

Then, in verse twenty-two and followin', Daniel goes on to tell him what he had done in displeasin' God. You notice, in these other verses, he told him what he had failed to do; now, he says, "But, I'll tell you what you've done." He had lifted himself up against the Lord of heaven, bringin' the vessels from God's house in there so that his lords and wives and concubines could drink wine in them. He not only profaned the holy vessels, vessels that were tied up with all the sacred traditions and the covenants of Israel, but had gone further and praised the gods of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood, and stone—things which cannot see nor hear nor know. Daniel brought this final judgment against him, "And the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified!" Wasn't that an indictment?

Daniel goes on to explain the source of that hand;

"Then was the part of the hand sent from him", that is, God. You notice, it didn't say that it was God's hand that did the writin', but it says that the part of the hand the king saw was sent from God. It may have been one of those holy watchers that came down to Nebuchadnezzar in that dream, only, this time, he was materially visible. To Nebuchadnezzar, he was just in the fabric of a dream.

In verse twenty-five, Daniel utters the words that have been written on the wall, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN." Then, he went on to explain them: "MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." Notice that Daniel changes the word, "UPHARSIN", when he goes to read it, to "PERES". Sarah tells me that some smart fellow said in a book that "PERES" is the singular form of the word, "UPHARSIN", and that the three words, literally translated, would be, "Numbered, numbered, weighed, divisions." That's what Daniel explained to the king. He said his kingdom was numbered, that Balshazzar was weighed in the balances, and that the kingdom was divided between the Medes and the Persians.

My, what thoughts are expressed in these short sentences: "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." That ought to take the pride out of anybody who is goin' on and buildin' up a kingdom out of his plans of what he is goin' to do without the Lord. No, nothin' can get along without God, whether it's a daisy, a star, or a human bein'.

"Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." God puts a mighty delicate pair of scales on a man to weigh his thoughts, to weigh his heart. I have an idea that every man with a balanced mind knows what he ought to be and what he ought to do and about how far short he would come if he were weighed at any time. It looks to me like that ought to make the whole world go to the Lord and ask His help, so that the balances will be swung in the right direction in the day of weighin'.

That sentence about the kingdom bein' divided and given to the Medes and the Persians sure came to pass right at that minute; a prophecy that had been spoken a hundred and seventy-five years before by Isaiah was about to be fulfilled. Turn back and read Isaiah, chapter forty-four, verse twenty-eight; and chapter forty-five, verses one to four. This was written a hundred and seventy-five years before the events really happened, and here is what is said, "That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shalt be laid. Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of the kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and the hidden riches of secret places, that thou (that is, Cyrus) mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. I have surnamed thee, though thou has not known me."

Now, there's something for you to think about! God even named Cyrus one hundred and seventy-five years before He fulfilled this passage and at least one hundred years before he was born; and, notice, it says that the gates shall not be shut: these were the gates in the bed of the River Euphrates, the waters of which were turned to one side by Cyrus, who was then besiegin' Babylon while Belshazzar and his crowd were drunk, profanin' God's vessels.

History books tell us that the Babylonians had a feast to the goddess of Spring, and that this wild orgy was called the feast of Tammuz. It was held about New Year's Day. There was a Greek fellow by the name of Xenophon who wrote a right smart about this in his books some time afterwards. Here's what is found in one of his books: about the night Cyrus turned the Euphrates River, so that

he could get his soldiers into the city through the dry river-bed, Gobryas, one of Cyrus' officers, said, "I should not be surprised if the doors of the palace are not now open, for the whole city seems tonight to be given up to revelry." You see, Cyrus knew that they were goin' to hold this feast. I reckon this was about the costliest New Year's debauch the world ever saw. It cost Belshazzar an empire!

Notice that in all the crash of the government, Daniel was clothed with scarlet, and a golden chain was put about his neck, and a proclamation was made concernin' him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. God has a way of workin' things around so that the man who is true will be honored in time. O course, it may be slow comin', but it will come!

This chapter closes by sayin' that "that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about three-score and two years old." While Cyrus was the actual conqueror of Babylon, Darius, the senior ruler, took the honor and all the credit in the Bible record.

## A Talk on the Sixth Chapter of Daniel

This chapter takes up the beginnin' of the second world empire as described by the silver in the metal image that was shown to Nebuchadnezzar and which was explained by Daniel. The Babylonian Empire, or that which was described under the head of gold in this image, lasted sixty-seven years, and, now, we come to study what was meant by the arms and breast of silver in Nebuchadnezzar's image.

Neighbors, keep in mind that Babylon fell in the year, 538 B.C., and this king, Darius, immediately took the throne, but Sarah says that the history books tell us he died in 536 B.C., so, what is told us in this chapter surely took place durin' these two years of Darius' reign. It is interestin' to note that Daniel was now ninety years old; he was pretty pert to be able to do all that he did at this ripe age.

Sarah was tellin' me the other night that another incident shows us that the rule had changed in Babylon. Under the Babylonians, the history books say that it was their custom to put people to death by burnin' them up, such as casting the Hebrew children into the fiery furnace, but the Persians, who next came into power, were sorta funny about the use of fire, in fact, they worshipped fire, and we find them throwin' people into the dens of wild animals to get rid of them.

The first three verses of this sixth chapter of Daniel show that Daniel set mighty well with Darius when the change in government came. It says that Darius made Daniel the head man over a hundred and twenty princes. It goes on in these verses to say that Darius set Daniel over the whole realm, but, as is always the case when you have a high job, the prominence exposes you to the attacks of people who don't like you. Ever since the world began, folks have found out that the price of bein' prominent is persecution; yet and still, there is a sight of people who

are willin' to take a chance on it and grin and bear the persecution.

Sarah and I were 'talkin' about this the other night, and she went over a lot of big fellows who had had just such a time as Daniel had. There was a smart fellow, Socrates, who knew a sight and was a powerful teacher, but they made him drink a cupful of poison and got rid of him. Every man who has ever pushed out a little into the world of discovery and invention has had the same trouble. Look at what they did to that fellow, Gallileo, who discovered the principle of the telescope. They almost killed him before he could do anything about his invention or his discovery. Then, there was Christopher Columbus; he did the world a right good favor in discoverin' a new world, but what did he get for it? They took him back home in hand-cuffs.

Every man who ever invented anything has been called a fool when he first started out talkin' about it. They called the first steam boat, "Fulton's Folly." When George Westinghouse tried to sell his invention of air brakes for trains to some big railroad man, they threw him out of the office, and started to lock him up as a crazy man. Yet, that railroad owner had to come back later and pay thousands and thousands of dollars to George Westinghouse to get to use this contraption that he had worked out about air brakes.

Somebody was a-tellin' me that when they started to use trains in England that some fellow got up in the House of Parliament and tried to have a law passed forbiddin' the trains to run, sayin' that the smoke would so foul up the air that it would kill all the cattle and smother everybody to death. Somehow or other, the trains kept on a-goin'. Of course, people who ride in them now are mighty proud that they didn't stop them.

Look at the fellows who have tried to advance the world along other lines. Martin Luther sure tried to help things out, but he had a terrible time; they tried to kill him. Now, a whole group of lovely Christian people call themselves

by his name, and most people say that he did the world a sight of good. Take Abraham Lincoln, for instance, he tried to free the poor colored man, and what did he get for it? A fellow by the name of Booth slipped up on him while he was at a play-actin' place, some theater or something, and shot the poor man and robbed the world of one of the greatest souls the world ever knew. Look at what they did to Jesus Christ, the only absolutely holy person who ever walked on this earth. They crucified Him between two thieves, and He went on to say in one of the Gospels that the people who would follow Him would be treated the same way.

Sarah was readin' me a piece the other day that some smart man by the name of Emerson wrote. He said something that goes sorta like this: "Preach a better sermon, write a better book, build a better mouse trap than your neighbor, and the world will make a beaten path to your door." Sarah says, "Yes, they'll make a beaten path to your door, but they'll bring a lot of old eggs and tomatoes and brick bats with them when they come!" I reckon it was just thinkin' on things like this that made one of the neighbors say, "Don't wait to be thanked if you do anything. Hurry on to avoid the kick!"

Daniel became the head man over the whole realm, but what a lot of brick bats he received! You see, his trouble began when this king, Darius, took a likin' to Daniel and promoted him. He put Daniel in the first place, because Daniel had the qualifications for such. If there ever was one man in this world who arose not from political pull, it was Daniel. He arose just like a bird risin' on the wings of his own efforts, of course with the Lord a-helpin' him. Never leave that out when you try to explain Daniel. His trouble was simply this, he had to pay the price of leadership. That's a terrible price to pay, but remember that the criticism and the fault-findin' always come from little people who can't do what the one they criticize is doin', or, at least, can't do it as well. The pastime of little minds is findin' fault with the people who are really doin'

the worthwhile things. I'll guarantee you that right now while I'm settin' this down on paper, there's not a president or a ruler or a leader in the world whom a lot of people would not give a pretty to kill. When you ask these people why they want to kill them, the only answer they can give is that the folks they hate are at the top.

Just like the law of gravitation that pulls everything down, just so in human life, there is something that tries to keep everybody from goin' up. Did you ever notice that any old tin can, piece of watermelon rind, or old rotten log can float down stream, but whenever you see anything goin' up stream, it either has fins and is hittin' the water right and left, or it's got an engine. You never drift up stream.

I had a funny thing to happen the other day. Bud, you see, that's our son, was foolin' around and got on one of these football teams. Nothin' would do Sarah but we must go out and see him play. Well, it was terrible. It just looked like they tried to kill everybody that was out there playin'. They knocked down and dragged out, then poured water on them to bring them to, so that they could get up and go back in there again. Finally, Sarah leaned over to me and whispered, "Josiah, I've got a good notion to go home and get that horse liniment, because somebody's goin' to get hurt, if they keep on a-foolin' around here like they're a-doin' now."

I got up; I didn't like it. I just said to myself, "Well, there ain't a bit of use in everybody here a-fallin' on one man," and so I walked down there where the teams were. But, they told me that I couldn't go out on the field where they were a-playin'—or fightin'—whatever it was."

I said, "Why, you're crazy! My son's out there! That number thirty-four, that's my boy. Just now, everybody tried to fall on him and crush him. I don't think people ought to stand for it."

He said to me, "There's an umpire in there that's keepin' everything straight."

I said, "Why don't they knock some of these people

down that's up here in the grandstands, hurrahin' and doin' nothin'."

The fellow kinda winked his eye and said to me, "Old neighbor, the reason they tackled that fellow is because he's got the ball."

I said, "Oh, I see!"

So, I went back and sat down, and for the rest of the game, that was all I could think about: whenever you see a fellow gettin' tackled, you can be sure that he's carrying the ball. They never tackle a fellow that's settin' up there drinkin' red soda-water and eatin' an all-day sucker or one of those sandwiches with a piece of sausage in it, or some fellow with a walkin' stick a-wavin' a flag. They tackle the old dusty, sweatin' fellow down there that's got the ball. Neighbors, you just take a tip from an old country preacher: if you've been hit pretty hard in 1934 or in whatever year you got hit, just remember, the whole world seems bent on tacklin' the fellow that's got the ball. If you have been hit hard, why the only thing to do is get up and thank God that you were carryin' the ball.

We had a wonderful president once by the name of Theodore Roosevelt who said one of the smartest things; he said "the man who never makes a mistake is the man who does nothing at all." I'd like to add to that (of course, it may sound kinda funny for an old weak-minded country preacher addin' on to what a president said), that the fellow who never gets criticized by anybody is the fellow who does nothin' at all.

Aunt Lou Salter summed the whole thing up right well when she said, "I'd a whole lot rather start out to do something and get a part of it done, even if I was kinda criticized, than to start out to do nothin' and do the whole job and have the good will of everybody."

Now, let's get down a little further and see about the plottin' these fellows started. It says, "The presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion

nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him." Now, there's somethin' for you! They set out with their magnifyin' glasses, but they couldn't find a thing that was wrong. Isn't that a compliment?

Notice in the fifth verse they say, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." They were lookin' for something about which Daniel disagreed with them. Daniel had been under the old Babylonian rule with Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Nabonidus, and these new fellows who came in were Persians. Naturally, they didn't like the idea of a fellow who had been with the old Babylonian crowd bein' in the saddle. It's kinda like a republican administration puttin' a Democrat at the top or visa-versa or versa-visa, which-ever it is. So, they sought out to find where he differed from them, and that would be an occasion against him. They figured that he was true to his God, and they would catch him sometime when he wasn't true to their religion. You know, there's a lot of that goin' on in the world. The only fault a lot of people find with other folks is that they disagree with them.

Wasn't it a compliment when they admitted that the only way they could find occasion against Daniel was in regard to the law concerning his God? Then, they went before the king, Darius, sayin' the little words that they always say, "King Darius, live forever." They began to brag on him and flatter him, sayin' that they wanted to pass a law "that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions."

You can see what they were after? They knew that whatever law was passed wouldn't keep Daniel from servin' his God. He was ninety years old, and by that time a fellow generally gets set in his ways; what he believes, he believes; and what he's goin' to do, he's goin' on and do it. They figured that Daniel would be true to his God and that would get him into a peck of trouble.

They asked the king to have this law passed and reminded him that the law of the Medes and Persians never changed. You know, that old king fell right into the trap and signed the writin' and made it a law.

Verse ten gives us a good look into the character of this man, Daniel. It says, "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God."

Daniel knew that they were outside of his window lookin' at him; when he knelt down there, he had some idea of what it was goin' to cost him. He knew what the law was, that if he prayed to God he would be cast into the lions' den, but he paid the price. Now, we begin to understand why the remainin' six chapters of this book tell us about the wonderful things God told Daniel. It was simply because Daniel was true.

Neighbors, God never gives the secrets of His program, nor endues with His power, nor gives the fullness of His blessin' until the person to whom He gives it has stood the test. There are a lot of people today wonderin' why God doesn't trust them with more power, and why He doesn't give them more blessin'. If they would just stop to think, they would know the reason; it's because they've been weighed and found wantin'. When God weighs you in the balance of testin', and you come up to standard, He turns loose every blessin' that He has.

Somebody was tellin' me the other day that I ought not make the way of a Christian so hard; not to tell people about what it costs to be a real Christian. I replied, "I don't think we ought to make it any easier than the Lord makes it." Jesus was talkin' one day, and He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." You see, He wrote out the cost of bein' a real out-and-out Christian in plain figures.

No one has a right to rub the price out and mark it down cheaper. The Lord set the price in plain letters so nobody would ever say, "Well, I didn't know what it was goin' to cost." You have to pay for everything you get; not only is this true in religion, but in everything.

That was one of the most costly prayers that was ever prayed, that is, when you look at it from the human level. He paid the price of bein' cast into the lions' den; but he had the satisfaction of bein' true to the God who had blessed him through the ninety years of his life.

This crowd of plotters went to the king and laid all the facts before him. They had the old king on the spot: he either had to break his word, go back on the established law of the Medes and Persians, which boasted that it never was altered; or he had to let a man whom he loved and admired very much be punished. It tells us in the fourteenth verse of this sixth chapter of Daniel that this old king, "When he heard these words was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him."

Many a man has done a foolish thing, then he wasn't big enough man to admit that he was wrong. For that reason, many an innocent man has suffered, just because somebody didn't have the sense of justice nor the courage to let people make fun of him or criticize him for changin' his mind.

It was a mighty poor excuse for the king to try to work up an alibi for himself when he said to Daniel, "Well, I've got to put you in the lions' den, but the God that you've been servin' all the time, He'll deliver you." You see, the king tried to pass the buck to the Lord. There are a lot of folks in the world like that; they put all the blame on the Lord, not realizing that the blame rests upon their own hands.

So, they put Daniel in the lions' den, placin' a stone across the mouth of the pit so Daniel couldn't get out nor his friends rescue him. The old king took his ring and

sealed it so that they could be sure it never was opened.

But, I want you to notice what became of the king. It tells us in the eighteenth verse: "Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him; and his sleep went from him." The king had a mighty restless night. Yes, when a fellow has acted the fool, he's got a restless night comin' to him! That old king, Darius, wasn't the last man who has rolled and tumbled and felt like the bed was full of brick bats, all because he hadn't been the man he ought to have been. The king tossed on his bed all durin' the night that Daniel was in the lions' den.

The next mornin' the king got up very early and hurried out there to the den of lions, cryin', "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Don't you know that old king's heart was poundin' when he asked that question? There were many people in Babylon wonderin' what the answer out of the lions' den would be. I just want to say right here to you neighbors, that whenever a man is true, you can expect the voice of victory to come from the pit of trial. That's been true down the ages, and it will be true to the end of time.

Listen to what Daniel said, "O king, live for ever." It always tickles me how they rave around here, each one wishin' the king to live forever, and about half of the crowd would love to kill him! However, Daniel meant these words; he liked this king, and he really wished that the king would live forever. He went on to say, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me."

I started to write about this on a typewriter once (I use the "Bible system," seek and find). I was a-punchin' around, and when I took the piece of paper out, I found that I had written across the top of it, "The Lions in Daniel's Den." Well, that was a kind of a mistake, and yet it was right. That was Daniel's den. The old king had a restless night, walking the floor and tearin' his hair,

and the lions must have been powerful uncomfortable themselves with their jaws locked all night. Daniel was the only one who had a good night's rest! That's the way it is in the world when a person is innocent. It makes no difference what he has to go through with, the other people are worryin' a whole sight more than he is. When the daylight dawns, he'll be the one who will have had a good night's rest. I imagine those old lions were glad to get rid of Daniel. When Daniel was brought forth from the den, the king sent out another order and brought all these men, who had accused Daniel, and cast them into the same den of lions. It's kinda pitiful in the twenty-fourth verse, in which it says that their wives and children were cast in also. Yes, those poor foolish fellows didn't realize that what they were doin' would affect their families. It's that a way all the time. No man lives to himself, and whatever he does will bring blessin' or sufferin' to the folks back home. But, I want you to notice that those old lions didn't have their jaws locked when they threw these fellows in there. The difference was that these poor fellows didn't have any God to protect them. Daniel had a God who holds the mastery over lions. Isn't the man smart who turns his life over to the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the great God of the universe?

Then, Darius got on a high horse and wrote a piece to all people, nations, and languages. He started out just like Nebuchadnezzar did in that piece he wrote in the fourth chapter: "Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel." But, the thing that I wonder about is whether all of these pretty things that he said about the God of Daniel were not just to compliment Daniel, for it doesn't seem that he had much faith in the Lord Himself. I have often thought that it would have been a whole lot nicer if he had fallen down on his knees and thanked the God of heaven and to have given his heart to God, instead of takin' his time up braggin' about Daniel.

The twenty-eighth verse winds up this chapter by sayin', "So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

You notice that this man, Daniel, for ninety years had lived true to God. About seventy of these years had been spent in the most wicked city the world had ever known. They tried Daniel with everything from braggin' on him, tryin' to make a prince out of him, complimentin' him by givin' him the name that tied him to one of the gods of Babylon—everything from that down to throwin' him in a lion's den, but everytime he came out true. When the Lord suffered Nebuchadnezzar to take the children of Israel away to Babylon on those different trips that he made to Jerusalem, the Lord just threw in one young fellow. That's the way the Lord has in dealin' with folks like Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius. He lets them strut and cavort around, but he always sees that there's one man there to act as His own mouthpiece and deliver His message. Through the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Nabonidus, Cyrus, and Darius, Daniel kept right on being true to God. Sometimes he was down, sometimes he was up, but he was always brought out by the Lord in the times of great crises. The world has forgotten about these great kings. Of course, all the fellows who dig up old bricks and the records of the nations that used to be may be sorta interested in what these kings did, but the dust of the centuries has covered them up with all their glory; while today, Daniel is beloved, admired, and preached about in a thousand pulpits throughout Christendom. Somewhere away up yonder where they walk in white with God, Daniel is happy now over the satisfaction that he passed to the world, while he was in it, the messages of God.

Now, we pass from the six chapters that deal with history in the book of Daniel to the remainin' six chapters that take up the prophecies of the book.

## A Talk on the Seventh Chapter of Daniel

Chapter seven starts out by tellin' us that Daniel had a dream, a dream evidently given to clear up what Daniel had never understood about the metal image that Nebuchadnezzar saw and Daniel interpreted. Daniel had evidently asked the Lord many times to explain it more fully to him, and in this seventh chapter, God answers the prayers of this blessed man. It just goes to show that the Lord meant what He said over in the New Testament when He told us that the Spirit would guide us into all truth. This time, Daniel was shown the vision of four winds in heaven striving upon a great sea.

Verse three says that four great beasts came up from the sea. The first one was like a lion, but had the wings of an eagle. It says, "The wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it." Let us study now this first beast that Daniel saw in his dream.

Let me say, first, as Sarah told me the other night, a lot of the great Bible teachers say that "sea" in the Bible is used in a symbolic way and nearly always means a mass of people, unless it's located in some particular way to show it really means a sea of water. This use of the word "sea" in this case means the Mediterranean Sea, for around it all the nations represented by these four beasts were built, their kingdoms prospered, and declined. There's a great argument, so Sarah says, whether the Roman Empire has ever ceased to be or not. Just between you and me and the gate post, I don't think it ever has. The Roman Empire is considered to be the fourth nation that was in the metal image that Nebuchadnezzar saw. It speaks here of the ragin' waves of this sea that Daniel saw, and I think that in this, we have a picture of the restlessness and discontent among the nations pictured in the metal image and shown to Daniel in this vision. Bible students say that God gave to Daniel in this dream the same

thing that He gave to Nebuchadnezzar in his dream, but one of the differences is this: God showed to this old king, Nebuchadnezzar, the rise and fall of the Gentile nations as they would look through the eyes of someone on earth; therefore, these nations would seem mighty great. God drew the picture then, in keepin' with the idea of a golden head, the silver shoulders, brass thighs, and the iron legs. But, the picture that God gave to Daniel in this dream was how these nations appeared to God, seein' them a-rearin' and a-tearin' and a-killin' each other like wild beasts; therefore, He shows them under the symbol of ravenous beasts.

Verse four tells us that the first beast looked like a lion, but it had eagle's wings. Sarah says that among the ruins of the old Babylonian Empire, bricks and clay tablets have been found with pictures of lions with eagles' wings as emblems of the Babylonian rule. This confirms the idea that this vision Daniel saw was the same as the one Nebuchadnezzar saw, and it ties up this first beast with the Empire of Babylon. But, notice that as Daniel looked upon this strange beast, its wings were plucked. That evidently describes what happened to Nebuchadnezzar and to the Babylonian Empire in the years that followed the reign of this great monarch. If there ever was a ruler that got plucked, it sure was this old king!

Verse five tells us that the second beast was like unto a bear, and it raised itself up on one side (that is, one side was higher than the other) and had three ribs in its mouth. It was said of this beast that it would devour much flesh. All that we have to do is to think a little to realize that next to the lion, the bear is about the wildest and the worst beast in the woods, and as the silver comes under the gold in the metal image that Nebuchadnezzar saw, just so does the position of the bear follow that of the lion. We are then pretty certain in thinkin' that this bear was the same as the second empire shown in the metal image, that of the Medes and the Persians. A Persian fellow by the name of Xerxes went over to Greece and

took over two million men to whip out all those people. Notice that this bear was up on one side, so that one side was higher than the other. Well, that's just about the way it was accordin' to the history books. Persia was stronger than Media in the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. Now, the three ribs that Daniel saw in the mouth of this bear were evidently the three kingdoms which the Medes and Persians whipped and took over: Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt.

The next beast that Daniel saw was "like a leopard which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; and the beast also had four heads; and dominion was given to it." You see a leopard is quicker and gets about faster than either a bear or a lion. It sure is a dangerous-bitin' animal. Alexander the Great just fits the picture of such an animal. He did a powerful lot of damage; in about ten years he overthrew Persia and conquered the whole world as they knew it then. Yes, that fellow, Alexander, died when he was thirty-three. By the way, as I told you before, he died in Babylon.

Now, about these "four wings of a fowl." That naturally raises the question, how would they fit into this picture? Well, Bible students say, and the history books agree with them, that the four heads in the third beast picture here that Daniel saw represented the four kingdoms that made up the empire of Alexander the Great after he died. These were Thrace, Macedonia, Syria, Egypt.

It says in verse fifteen that this troubled Daniel. He couldn't understand it. I think he realized it was the same picture that was shown to Nebuchadnezzar, but he couldn't tell about these four heads. Of course, Alexander hadn't lived and died, and hadn't divided up his kingdoms among his four generals as yet. However, about two years later, another vision was given to Daniel, the vision of the ram and the he-goat, and when that was given, it was all explained to him. You see, the Lord wants us to be willin' to wait; a lot of things that we may

not understand today will be explained to us if we will give the Lord time. So, we'll wait for bringin' that out until we get over to the eighth chapter.

Now, let us take up the fourth beast that Daniel saw. It says in verses seven and eight that this beast was "dreadful, terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." Daniel added these words, "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things."

We want to keep in mind that in Daniel's dream these beasts came up one after the other. That further bears out the thought that these beasts are the same as the four kingdoms that were shown to Nebuchadnezzar that came one after the other. Naturally, Daniel realized that the iron teeth in this fourth beast coincided with the iron legs in the metal image, as did also the ten horns with the ten toes in the metal image. What mystified and bothered Daniel so much was that little horn springin' up among those ten horns, for there wasn't any extra toe put among those ten toes; he was worried about that. The little horn had eyes like a man and had a mouth; it evidently was goin' to be some man who would come up at the end of everything. There are a lot of people who believe that the little horn that came up represents a man who is goin' to come in the last days of the Jews and the last days of the world, and they have got a name for this fellow; they call him the Anti-christ.

Daniel goes on in verses nine and twelve and gives us a terrible scene of judgment and a vision of Christ receivin' the kingdom. It looks like the Lord was tryin' to show Daniel something that He never showed Nebuchadnezzar, that some kind of terrible punishment was goin'

to fall on the Gentile nations, and that Christ, after that, would receive a kingdom.

You notice here in the ninth verse, Daniel says he kept a-lookin'. He saw the Ancient of days sittin' on a throne; the hair of his head was like pure wool, and his throne was like fiery flame. It kinda makes us think of what John saw in the book of Revelation in the first chapter. Then, it goes on to say that this person represented here as the little horn spoke such big words and talked so big that he got killed. He was slain and his body was given to the burnin' flames. You read the same thing over in Revelation where it tells that the beast, the Anti-Christ, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and I think it's the same picture.

Verse fourteen gives a beautiful picture of Christ, the Son of man, comin' into His glory, receivin' His kingdom, all people and nations and languages servin' Him, and it adds that "His dominion is an everlastin' dominion, which shall not pass away."

No wonder that worried Daniel! Nobody had ever heard anything like that. It says that Daniel came to one of the heavenly visitors that stood by and asked him what all this meant. The visitor told him that the great beast that he had seen was the four kings which would arise out of the earth. Well, that settles it; that's what we've been talkin' about all through this seventh chapter! He also told him that the saints of God would take the kingdom and possess it forever and ever.

In the nineteenth verse, Daniel asks this heavenly visitor about the fourth beast. It was kinda worryin' Daniel. He said it was so different from all the others, the one that had the iron teeth, the nails of brass, which broke everything in pieces, and stamped around so with its feet. He asked about the ten horns and the little horn that was worryin' him so. This visitor told him that the fourth beast would be the fourth kingdom upon the earth which should be different from all the other kingdoms, which would spread all over the whole earth, and would break

everything into pieces. The ten horns would be ten kings. He goes on to say that another one would rise up different from all the others, and he would whip the three outstandin' kings; "he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High." That's evidently some big fellow who has either come or will come at the end of the fourth kingdom, but he's goin' to get whipped, and his kingdom will be taken away from him.

Now, if anybody would ask me what I personally believe about this little horn, I would say, "Of course, you can believe like you want to, but I don't think that this big fellow has come yet." I think that's to be in the future. It tells us here some of the things that he will do, this person who is to be known as Anti-christ: he will whip three kings, speak great words against the most High, will wear out the saints, and try to change the times and the laws. It sure is funny how much alike this vision of Daniel's is to that in Revelation, the thirteenth chapter, verses one to seven. John saw the same thing: "I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his sea, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, saying, who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." Isn't that interestin'? He even goes on and says that he saw this beast who was goin' to speak great things. This is evidently a person, and the same one, whom Daniel saw as the "little horn."

There's another funny thing in the Bible; in Second Thessalonians, chapter two, verses eight to ten, we find Paul talkin' about this same person. He says, "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."

Evidently, all these great Bible men were seein' the same thing. Of course, the further back one was, like Daniel, the dimmer was the vision. But, they saw the same thing; I don't have any doubt about it. Honestly, neighbors, between you and me and the gate post, I think that this is the Anti-Christ fellow we hear so much talk about.

To tell you the truth, my head got hot just sittin' here talkin' about it! No wonder Daniel, who saw this, says, "My cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart." My, my, my, Daniel's brain must have been touched from the Lord to receive all that passed through it.

## A Talk on the Eighth Chapter of Daniel

I declare, when a fellow gets to readin' in this Daniel book, he just runs into one thing right after another. By the time he gets out of one, he's into another.

Now, Daniel tells us in the first two verses of this eighth chapter, "In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. And I saw in a vision: and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai."

It's sorta interestin' to me that the smart fellows tell us that, beginnin' with this eighth chapter, on through the rest of this book, Daniel is written in Hebrew. I think the reason for such is that these chapters are of particular interest to the Jews, and, therefore, Daniel wrote in this language so that the Jews would be sure to pass it on down to their children and their children's children.

Bible students say this vision that Daniel has in this chapter occurred in the third year of the reign of Belshazzar, in 538 B.C., two years after the vision of the four wild beasts. It occurred in the same year that Babylon fell, probably just before the fall. The purpose of it was to let Daniel know, before everything went to pieces, what empires would succeed that of Babylon, and to give him a little more knowledge about the little horn-person, whom he had seen before, with eyes and a mouth talkin' so big.

Daniel tells us that he saw a ram with two horns, and that one of the horns was higher than the other. He saw the ram pushin' northward, westward, and southward, and no beast could stand against him. Then, he says he saw a he-goat come out of the west. That he-goat had a notable horn between his eyes He came to the ram that had the two horns and lit into him with all the fury of his power. He smote the ram and broke his two horns, so

that there was no power left in the ram. He cast him down to the ground and stamped on him; so, that left this he-goat the boss of the whole situation.

Then, he says that the he-goat waxed very strong. When he was very strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it, came up four notable ones, four horns instead of one. Out of one of them came forth a little horn that became mighty big and went toward the south and toward the east, toward the pleasant land, which was evidently Palestine. This little horn kept gettin' bigger and bigger, until he fought against the Prince of the host, evidently Christ. And, also, the little horn took away the daily sacrifice.

Now, there was something to bother Daniel! It tells us here in verses thirteen and fourteen that while Daniel was worryin' over this ram and he-goat that he saw in the vision, he overheard some talk between two saints, or holy ones, as he called them. You see, they were just a-talkin' back and forth; they knew that Daniel was overhearin' them, and they wanted to help him out, help him understand it. One said to the other one, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation?" The other one answered and said, "Two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

I'll tell you, honestly, folks, when I get to readin' into that, I just feel like closin' up the Book, goin' out and feedin' the chickens, or walkin' around lookin' at the trees. It gets me so upset; it's so deep that it's beyond me.

I was tellin' Sarah about it. She said, "Well, I was readin' something on that the other day," and she asked me if I wanted her to read it to me. I said, "Go on," and here is what she said: "This talk about daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation was caused by a statement back there that the little horn, or whoever that person is, will take away the daily sacrifices. He went on to say that the daily sacrifice would be taken away for two thousand and three hundred days. Now, these days are literal

days. They will start from the time when the daily sacrifice, whatever that is, is taken away by this little horn fellow."

Now, you know that the Jews used to have daily sacrifices in the temple when they would offer the blood sacrifice; that was done away with hundreds and hundreds of years ago. Sarah says that she thinks that by the time this Anti-christ comes that the Jews will have come back to Jerusalem, built the temple, and started a-sacrificin' again. At least, some smart men say that. Then, when the person represented by "the little horn" comes, or the Anti-christ, he will stop these renewed sacrifices for two thousand and three hundred days. Of course, that's her idea, but I'll tell you honestly, folks, it's too deep for me!

Then, another funny thing happened in the fifteenth and sixteenth verses. Daniel was worryin' about the meanin' of all this, when he said he heard somebody talkin'; the voice called out, "O Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision."

I'll tell you, brother, that sure would have been enough to raise a fellow's hair, wouldn't it? This Gabriel to whom the person was talkin', Daniel says, came near to where he was a-standin'. Daniel was scared; honestly, I don't blame him. He fell on his face, and Gabriel said to him, "Understand, O son of man; for at the time of the end shall be the vision."

Now, that ought to explain what's been a-worryin' us. That doesn't mean the "end of time", but at the time of the end of something that's goin' on in God's program, away out yonder from the time that Daniel heard Gabriel talkin'.

Daniel just passed out! He says that he fell out in a deep sleep; he just didn't know a thing in the world! It kinda makes me think of the time that old Aunt Rose was talkin' and tellin' about a friend of hers who was knocked out. She said she was knocked "plumb conscious" and didn't know a thing for a half hour. Well, Daniel was knocked plumb out. Do you blame him with thoughts like

these goin' through his mind? Daniel was told to shut up the vision, that it wouldn't be fulfilled for many days. It wouldn't come to pass until the time of the end.

Somebody says, "Well, what are you doin' foolin' with it?" I'm just readin' the Bible to you. You see, God never set me out to change the Bible, He just told me by the Spirit to read it, and with what feeble light I have, to try to explain it. It seems to me that all this that Daniel saw was meant to honor him and to tell him so that he could tell the world to be lookin' for something that would come at the time of the end.

Now, let's go back and study that ram and the he-goat for just a little while. You see, when Daniel explained Nebuchnezzar's dream, the Lord gave to him the meaning of the metal image: four world empires, each one succeedin' the other. They were pictured in that image as a gold head, silver shoulders, brass thighs, iron legs, etc., but He wouldn't tell the name of any of them except Babylon. Then, in the next vision that Daniel had in the seventh chapter, the four wild beasts, which Sarah says came sixty-two years after Nebuchadnezzar saw his metal image, again Daniel was not given the names of the kingdoms that were to come after Babylon. But, here in this vision of the ram and the he-goat, the Lord gave Daniel not only the names of the silver kingdom and the brass kingdom of the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw, but He also gave him some more information.

It's sorta funny, too, that when they were diggin' up the ruins of Persia, they found that the picture they used to represent their kingdom was a ram. They found money that had the ram's head on one side and a ram lyin' down on the other. The generals wore rams' heads, or something that represented such, set with all kinds of pretty jewels for symbols on top of their helmets.

Also, we have found out that the emblem of Macedonia, or the kingdom of Alexander the Great, was a goat. One history writer called Alexander "the son of a goat." Of

course, to us, that would be kinda low-ratin' a man, but Alexander thought that was a compliment.

So, it's easy to see that the ram and the he-goat in this second vision given to Daniel were the same thing as the bear and the leopard in Daniel's dream, and the same as the silver shoulders and the brass thighs in the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw. Another funny thing, the movement of the ram pushin' westward was just exactly what the history books say that the Medes and the Persians did when they moved over toward the kingdom of Lydia; then, northward toward Babylon; and southward toward Egypt. Sorta funny, ain't it? But that's what it says, and a long time before it happened.

The Angel Gabriel, who was talkin' here, explained that the great horn that Daniel saw between the he-goat's eyes represented the first king. Now, the history books tell us who that was. That was Alexander the Great. Sarah says that she read in a book that he had thirty thousand soldiers a-walkin' and five thousand a-ridin' horses. He whipped the Persians in a big battle, and then turned eastward in the followin' year and whipped another Persian army of six hundred thousand men fightin' under that big fellow, Darius. The four horns that are associated with the great horn, which was the first king, accordin' to the explanation made by the Angel Gabriel, were the four generals to whom Alexander turned over his kingdom. One was Cassander, another was Lysimachus, another was Seleucus, and another was Ptolemy; at least, that's what Sarah says she finds in the history books.

This Angel Gabriel goes on in verse twenty-three to say a little more about that little horn that came up in place of the great horn. If that had been left to me, I would have just figured out it was some king that came up out of one of those four kingdoms into which Alexander's empire was broken up, but, no, Angel Gabriel says that his comin' won't come to pass until "the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full." So, the angel straightens us out on that. That means,

very likely, that this same fellow, whom we have been callin' "Anti-christ", in the latter time, the age in which we are now livin', will come up, and he will be this little horn. It looks sorta like these four kingdoms that came out of Alexander's empire will be somehow revived in the last times, and they will be four of the ten kingdoms represented by the toes in the metal image. Well, that may sound like I've been hit on the head with a wet cob, but anyhow, I know one of them has already come to life. That's Greece; it's a nation today with a ruler and all that. Also, Egypt has a ruler, and there are two of the four right there. The other two, Thrace and Syria, may yet come up and fulfill this prophecy. Nobody knows, but I'm just tellin' you what's here in the book of Daniel.

Commencin' at verse nineteen, this Angel Gabriel was talkin', and he says, "Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be." Then, he goes on to say in the twentieth verse that the ram which Daniel saw was the kingdom of Media and Persia, so that settles that. The rough goat was the king of Grecia, Alexander the Great; that settles that! Then, verse twenty-two says, "That being broken", that is, Alexander, "four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up." That refers to the four generals to whom he turned over the kingdom. I've been tellin' you about that.

Then, the angel goes on to describe something that is goin' to happen in the latter time of their kingdom. Now, just what that means, I don't know, unless it means for us to think particularly about the latter time, and that will put it in the future from us right now. There will arise "a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, And his power shall be mighty, but not his own power! And he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he

shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days." To tell you the truth, Sarah and I were talkin' it over, and we think that here is the picture of the Anti-christ who will come up at the end.

Verse twenty-seven tells us that Daniel fainted and was sick certain days, but afterwards he got up and went on about the king's business. However, it says that he was "astonished at the vision, but none understood it." Now, I'm telling you the truth, neighbors, I don't think anybody today understands it all. But as the scroll of time is unfolded, we'll find out more and more about it.

## A Talk on the Ninth Chapter of Daniel.

We come now to study the ninth chapter, and in this we find out first a right smart about Daniel himself. Daniel located the time in this chapter. He says that it was in the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, in the first year of his reign. History books say that was five hundred and thirty-eight years before Christ.

It is kinda interestin' to notice that that was the same year that Daniel was cast into the lions' den. Then, this mighty prayer that he prayed was in connection with the awful trial through which he had passed. Yes, when folks go through great trials like the lions' den experience of Daniel, if they stay true to God, He always gives them something really worth while.

We also find out that he was a reader of the book of Jeremiah. You see, he read the Scriptures that were available then and was a great Bible student in his day. So, we find out that Daniel was a man of prayer and a man of Bible readin'. That's powerful interestin'!

Daniel was bothered in the ninth chapter. You see, he read in Jeremiah about how long the captivity of the Jews was goin' to last. He evidently read Jeremiah, the twenty-fifth chapter and the eleventh verse, for here is what it says, "And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." That's why Jeremiah sent his prophets over to Babylon, to let the people know that they might just as well settle down there for quite a spell. Jeremiah went on in the twenty-ninth chapter, verses four to ten, and said this, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, build ye houses, and dwell in them; take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; for thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place." (That is, Jerusalem.)

Now, you see, Daniel read that, and he figured out that he had been there in Babylon sixty-eight years, and if that prophecy was true, it wouldn't leave but two more years to pass. And, here's what bothered him: he understood from all these visions that Nebuchadnezzar had seen and that he had seen, that there were goin' to be four kingdoms rise up before the Jews would be really delivered. This got him all upset, and he said to himself, "How in the world can that be, because only two of the kingdoms that were shown to Nebuchadnezzar and to me have passed, that is, Babylon and the Medes and the Persians. How in the world can the other two that are pictured come and go in just two years?"

The Lord answered his questions concerning these seventy years in another vision which is called "the vision of the seventy weeks." It was given to Daniel to clear up all this. Evidently, Daniel had given himself to prayer and fastin', waitin' on the Lord, and, as will happen to anyone who does that, he got the answer.

Let's look at Daniel's prayer just a minute. My, how he confessed the sin of Israel and begged the Lord to forgive them and to give them another chance! He said, "We have sinned, and have done wickedly." In other words, he meant that the nation of the Jews had got just exactly what was comin' to them, but he begged the Lord for His Name's sake to have mercy, to forgive, to hear His people, and to give them another chance. It's kinda touchin' there to notice how Daniel prayed. He didn't say, "*These people* have sinned", but he put himself in there and said, "*We* have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled." Then, he goes on further to say, "to us belongeth confusion of face." Yes, he knew the law of Moses. He said, "We've broken it, we haven't done right, and we haven't got a thing in the world to say but just ask thee, O Lord, to have mercy."

Did you notice that while he was speakin', prayin', and confessin' his sins and the sins of the people that some-

thing happened? An angel came and talked to him. It always is just like that! If everyone of us who reads these lines, right now, will just get down before God and stay on our knees long enough and be sincere enough and pray right, there will be a heavenly touch come to our lives even while we are prayin'. God broke up this prayer meetin'! He came right in the middle of it with the answer. Well, maybe not the answer, but certainly, the explanation of how things were goin' to be.

In the first place, God sent a message to Daniel that he was greatly beloved in heaven. How would you like to get a telegram like that, sayin' that you were greatly beloved in the Glory World? It would make everything else all right, wouldn't it? It wouldn't make any difference how bad things were, you could be happy if you felt like Heaven thought a lot of you. That ought to be a lot of encouragement to people who really are doin' right and are havin' a hard time. It doesn't make any difference what the world says; it's what Heaven says after all that counts.

Also, the angel said that he came to give him skill and understandin'. That's another thing that's mighty encouraging, to have help come from Heaven; and I want to tell you, neighbors, that I believe if we'll come to the Lord in the right way, He will give us all just exactly what we need to do what we have to do. May God bless everyone of you as you read this, and may you look to Him for help.

## A Talk on the Seventy Weeks In the Ninth Chapter of Daniel

Well, sir, you neighbors would have died a-laughin' at Sarah and me tryin' to make us a chart on this seventy weeks. You see, there are a lot of the good brothers who have come through the neighborhood here with everything in Daniel worked out on sheets of domestic. So Sarah and I thought we would make us out one; but, I'll tell you the truth, we got so crossed up and got the dates so tangled up until finally I said to Sarah, "I just don't believe I can make one of those charts. Let's just pass up these seventy weeks."

She said, "Josiah Hopkins, if you're goin' to talk on the ninth chapter of Daniel, you can't pass over any of it."

So, I said, "All right, I'll do the best I can."

You see, Sarah and I together don't know much. What we both know don't amount to a hill of beans. So, we'll just have to depend on the Lord for help. I said to Sarah, "If anybody ever works out this thing exactly, the Angel Gabriel is goin' to have to come back here and help them out just like he helped out Daniel." But, I have asked the Lord to help me, so here's the best I can work out on it.

You see, Daniel got so tangled up that he just about passed out, and the Angel Gabriel said in the twenty-fourth verse of this ninth chapter, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city." Well, that gives us a little light. That shows us that whatever the seventy weeks mean here, they evidently refer to Daniel's people. So, you can start out with this in mind, that the seventy weeks are a Jew time-piece. Well, so far, so good.

Now, let's see what's the next thing. He goes on and gives the purpose of the seventy weeks in these words, "To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins." Well, that sorta looks like the Lord was goin' to punish Israel for the way they carried on, misbehaved, and dis-

obeyed Him. So, the seventy weeks are goin' to include the Lord's dealin' with the Jews by way of punishment. It will go on and include the time when an end will be made of sin.

The first thing that comes up in my mind is the fact that there wasn't any end made of sin till Jesus Christ died on Calvary. That's what He came and died for, to make a way to take care of sins, to take the place of all the sheep and goats that had been sacrificed through times passed. So, we can be right certain that the seventy weeks, whatever they are, include the punishin' time for the Jews, goin' up to and including the crucifixion of Christ. Now, what do you know about that! That sure included a lot of time, didn't it? This is a powerful piece of time, these seventy weeks!

Then, it goes on to say that it will go up to the time, "to bring in everlasting righteousness." Well, the first thing that comes up in my mind on that is that the only time that this old world will know anything about everlastin' righteousness will be when the Lord Himself is here, and that will mean that the seventy weeks will go up to and include the time right to the second comin' of Christ when He's goin' to start the millenium reign.

Now, the twenty-fifth verse brings on some interestin' things. It says here, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks." Well, they had a funny way of saying' numbers. Addin' that all up, seven weeks and threescore and two weeks, the total will be sixty-nine weeks, whatever these weeks are. So, from the goin' forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem to the Messiah the Prince will be sixty-nine weeks. Well, we've got that straight so far.

Now, the next thing to figure out is when that commandment was made, "to go out and build Jerusalem". That's where a lot of Bible students have got all tangled up, like a passle of fishin' lines and fishin' hooks. The trouble is

that there were four of those decrees. The first one that the Bible tells about is found in Ezra, the first chapter, verses one to four. Here is what it says, "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom." The time that was given was in 536 B. C. That's the first decree.

Now, you'll find the second decree in Ezra, the sixth chapter, and the first twelve verses, where it says that Darius made a decree. Well, that was in 519 B. C.

Then, there's another decree, the third one. That was made by a fellow named Artaxerxes, king of Persia in 458 B. C.

There was still another decree. It was made by a fellow with a funny name, Artaxerxes Longimanus. Sarah says that that word, "Longimanus", really means "long-handed", so this king was named Artaxerxes, "the long-handed". Well, he made a degree in 445 B.C. You'll find that mentioned in Nehemiah, second chapter, verses one to eight.

Now, you'll have to take your choice about which one of these decrees made the startin' point for these mysterious seventy weeks. It looks like the Lord told Daniel so much, and then didn't go to the point enough to let anybody work out any exact time about this thing, and I think I know the reason why. You see, some of these fellows work out the exact time of the second comin' of the Lord. Yet the Bible says that no man knows the day nor the hour. Of course, somebody might work it out to just about when it's goin' to be, but you can be certain of this, and you can write it down in your almanac and hang it up there by the clock on the mantle-piece, that nobody will ever be able to tell you accordin' to the Bible, the day nor the hour. That's what the Bible says.

Now, verse twenty-five says something mighty interestin', "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build

Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks." Well, now, one end of the sixty-nine weeks period is the beginnin' of one of these decrees, and the other one is to the time of Messiah the Prince. Now, that started a lot of argument. You ought to hear Bill Ivens start a talk on that. Some say that time is when Jesus was baptized. Some say that it was when He was born. Some say it was when He was crucified. Some say it was when He ascended.

Yet, the very next verse, the twenty-sixth, says, "After threescore and two weeks (that is, sixty-two weeks) shall Messiah be cut off." That's the crucifixion of the Lord. Now, the thing that kinda bothered Sarah and me was the fact that verse twenty-five talks about sixty-nine weeks while verse twenty-six talks about sixty-two weeks. I reckon they both start from the same time and one comes up to the comin' of the Prince, and the other talks about comin' up to the time He's cut off, but it leaves a difference of seven weeks in there for some reason.

I was kinda taken up with the thought that some smart brother brought out, sayin' that these so-called weeks are really periods of seven years each; just like seven days make the week of time as we know it, seven years make one of these prophetic weeks. Well, that is sorta interestin'. They say that in the original language in which this was written, it's really "seventy sevens" instead of seventy weeks. The Holy Spirit will have to put into somebody's mind what each one of those sevens is, whether it's a day or a week or a year. So, this fellow was a-talkin', and he said, "I'll tell you one way to account for that difference here of seven weeks, is to remember the time that is took to build the temple in Jerusalem, after they got the decree. It was forty-nine years in buildin'." Well, that's seven periods of seven years each. It's sorta interestin', ain't it?

But, anyway, there's one thing that bothers me worse than all that put together. It's this next verse, the twenty-sixth. It says after the Messiah shall be cut off, "the

people of the prince shall come." Now, who is that prince that's goin' to come to take His place unless it's the Anti-christ? You see, there's a right smart talk in the Bible about this Anti-christ, and it says here in this twenty-sixth verse of the ninth chapter of Daniel that the people of this prince who shall come shall destroy the city, evidently Jerusalem, and the santuary, surely, the temple; "and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

That sure is mysterious talkin', isn't it? It sounds like there's some big fellow just like the Anti-christ who's goin' to come, and, in the midst of the Bible week, he's goin' to cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, after he's made a covenant with many for the period of one week. The angel says that in the middle of the week, he's goin' to break it and cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. Now, isn't that funny?

Sarah and I were talkin' that over, and here's about the conclusion we came to, sittin' around the fire, drinkin' buttermilk, and eatin' sweet potatoes, askin' the Lord to help us as we thought on this ninth chapter of Daniel. You see, this period of seventy-sevens, that Gabriel explained to Daniel, covers time that relates to the Jews when they are at home in their own land. In some way, the first sixty-nine weeks bring the Jews up to the time when they were scattered from their homeland. Right there the prophetic clock stopped as far as these seventy-sevens are concerned. It will never start to tickin' again until the Jews go back home. The Jews are the homing pigeons of the Bible. The prophecy clock is tickin' off time while they are in Jerusalem worshippin' in their temple, and the pendulum hangs still when they are gone. So, Sarah and I worked out this idea with the help of the Lord, that the last week (you see, only sixty-nine are accounted for up until the time the Messiah is cut off and up until the time the Jews are scattered, makin' up the total of seventy) won't start until the Jews are back home again in Jerusalem. You know, there's a sight of passages in

the Bible that say that they'll be goin' back. You'll find that all through the Bible.

In this twenty-sixth verse, it doesn't say that this prince, who shall come after Jesus, will do all this destroyin', but it says that "the people of the prince" will do it. It kinda looks like the people, whom the angel says shall destroy the temple and do that terrible work, are goin' to be the people from whom the Anti-christ will rise.

Then, it goes on to speak of some man who will come up at the last in the twenty-seventh verse who "shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." You see, here's that last week. The Jews are back home, and the prophetic clock starts to runnin' again, and some big fellow, evidently the Anti-christ, will make a covenant with these Jews, and, right in the middle of that week (that is, three and a half years, if the week is what we have been figurin' on, a time of seven years), this old Anti-christ, who has been raised up and runnin' everything, will break that covenant and cause the sacrifice to cease, evidently in the temple that the Jews will build when they come back to Jerusalem sometime.

Then, there'll be a world of trouble. It also tells here in the twenty-sixth verse about "the war desolations". You know, there's a right smart amount in the Bible about the last war which will be the War of Armageddon. Law-me! That's goin' to be a bad war! That will evidently be the war started by this big fellow who will destroy the temple and all in the midst of this last prophetic week. This last week will evidently go up to the time when the Lord will come back, do away with the Anti-christ, and start the millenium. Of course, now, this is just the idea of an old country preacher with the best light that I can find on it.

To sum it all up, the seventy weeks are a period of time when the Jews are in their own land, startin' with one of these decrees to go back and rebuild Jerusalem, comin' up to the time when Jesus was cut off, killed, and done away with, when the Jews were scattered. That will take six-

ty-nine of the seventy weeks, leavin' one more week. Through all the time in which the Gentile nations have had the rule, and the Jews have been wanderers over the face of the earth, the prophetic clock has been hangin' with a still pendulum in the temple of time. There will come a time when the Jews will come back home to rebuild the temple, the clock will start to tickin' again, and a fellow by the name of the Anti-christ will make a covenant with them. That will last for three and a half years. Then, he'll break it, destroy the temple, and start a war that will lead up to the War of Armageddon. The Lord will come in person and stop this war and bring in the millenium.

Well, it's a beautiful thought, but, of course, I don't know enough to be certain about any of these things. I can only tell you what I think the Bible teaches, and may the Lord bless you and help you to think on it.

I'll declare thinkin' on this got my head so hot that about the only thing I can do to comfort myself is what Sarah said, "Even if you can't get the dates all worked out, be sure you are ready to meet the Lord whether He comes, or whether you go." So she and I sat there and held hands and sang:

"We shall walk with him in white
In that country pure and bright,
Where shall enter naught that may defile;
Where the day-beam ne'er declines,
For the blessed light that shines
Is the glory of the Saviour's smile.

*Chorus*:

"Beautiful robes—Beautiful robes;
Beautiful robes we then shall wear;
Garments of light, lovely and bright—
Walking with Jesus in white—
Beautiful robes we shall wear.

"We shall walk with him in white
Where faith yields to blissful sight,
When the beauty of the King we see,
Holding converse full and sweet,
In a fellowship complete,
Waking songs of holy melody.

"We shall walk with him in white
By the fountains of delight;
Where the Lamb his ransomed ones shall lead;
For his blood shall wash each stain,
'Till no spot of sin remain
And the soul forevermore is freed."

## A Talk on the Tenth Chapter of Daniel

The openin' lines of the tenth chapter tell us that Daniel's last vision came to him in the third year of the reign of king Cyrus. This was in the year, 533 B. C. At least, that's what the history books say. In the twenty-first verse of the first chapter of Daniel, we are told there that Daniel was active in the affairs of Babylon until the first year of king Cyrus. Therefore, we are allowed to conclude that he was a superannuated prophet now, livin' a private life, spendin' his time in prayer and in fastin'.

We are also told that Daniel was greatly burdened about something. Well, when you read through some of the other books of the Bible, we get an idea about what was a-worryin' him. Of course, I may not know, but my idea is, he was worryin' about how few people were goin back to rebuild Jerusalem. Then, again, it might have been that he was sorrowin' over his inability to go back to Jerusalem. Daniel was past ninety at this time, and it may have been that he was too feeble to make the trip back.

We are told in the second chapter of Ezra, verse sixty-four, that only forty-two thousand, three hundred and sixty of the Jews went back to start out with rebuildin' the city of Jerusalem. A lot of the priests and the people had built houses in Babylon, and they didn't want to go off and leave the houses, the crops, and their land, so they just stayed in Babylon. You get an idea when you read the book of Esther that there were a sight of Jews who stayed right there in Babylon.

Then, another reason for Daniel's sorrow may have been the news that came back from travelers, how the neighbors around Jerusalem, that is, the Samaritans, had been pesterin' the Jews, so that they couldn't do much about buildin' the walls and rebuildin' the city. He may have been restless to see the Jews put back in their land and Jerusalem restored to its place, and the fact that they

were goin' to have to wait through the centuries may have discouraged him a sight. Between all these, there was something that had him sorrowin' so that he couldn't eat anything much. He went on a diet and went to fastin'.

He tells us in the second verse, "I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks." Then, the third verse goes on to say, "I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled."

In the fourth verse, he says that on the twenty-fourth day of the first month (Sarah says that that was in April) he was by the side of the great river, Hiddekel, and when he lifted up his eyes, he beheld a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. "His body was also like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude."

Now, it isn't difficult for a Bible student to figure out who that was, that "certain man." It must have been the Lord, Himself. This was evidently the same person whom John saw in Revelation, chapter one, verses twelve to fifteen. Here is what John says he saw, and you can see in a minute that it must have been the same person:

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wood, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters."

But, some of the neighbors will say, "Brother Josiah, do you think the Lord appeared back there in the Old Testament when He hadn't been born in Bethlehem of Judea yet?" Well, I just go by the Bible. You see, He appeared to Abraham in Genesis eighteen, one to eight,

and to Moses in the burnin' bush, Exodus three, one to six, and thirteen to fourteen. So, I just said to myself that if He appeared to Abraham and Moses, why wouldn't He appear to Daniel, since the Lord had shown him so much? It's sorta interestin' that when He appeared to Daniel before He was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, and when He appeared to John after He ascended from Mount Olivet, in both appearances, He was just the same. That makes us realize the meanin' of that passage in the Bible where it says that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The flyin' centuries make no mark upon the eternal brow of Jesus Christ!

It's interestin' to note the effect of this vision upon the persons who saw it, both in Daniel and in Revelation. In the tenth chapter of this book, we are told that this vision appeared only to Daniel, but that a great quakin' fell upon the men that were with him, and that they ran away to hide themselves, leavin' Daniel alone. Daniel goes on to say that when he heard the words of this "certain man", that he just about passed out. He fell on his face into a deep sleep, and his face was toward the ground. Now, when you turn over to Revelation, the first chapter and the seventeenth verse, you'll find out that when the Lord appeared to John, that the vision had the same effect. John said, "When I saw Him, I fell at his feet as dead." You see, the human mind is not set up to think on such a vision as that of the Lord Himself. In fact, the Bible says that no man can see the Lord and live, but both Daniel and John had their brains kinda touched up by the Holy Spirit so that they could stand the vision. If it hadn't been for that, they would have been burned to a crisp! It's kinda funny to me, too, that when Christ appeared to Saul of Tarsus in Acts nine, verses one to nine, that the sight of Him had the same effect on Saul of Tarsus. He fell down blind for several days, and they had to lead him to Damascus.

I want you to notice something else; in the eighth verse

you'll find these words, "Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision." That's the way visions generally come to people, not in the crowd, but when they are alone. It's in the quiet places where the Lord reveals Himself to the soul that loves Him and waits on the Lord. Moses saw a vision of the Lord alone in the desert. Daniel received this vision of the Lord when the crowd had run away and left him. Saul of Tarsus was knocked down and shut off from the crowd; even though they may have been around, there was a great sense of loneliness came on him when he saw the Lord. In Revelation, John was exiled and alone on the Isle of Patmos when the vision of the Lord was given to him.

Verse ten tells us, "And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands." Yes, the Lord touched him and gave him strength; but, did you notice that when the Lord touched him, he just got him up on his knees, and that the rest of this vision came to Daniel upon his hands and knees. It seems like some folks have to be put down on their hands and knees, before the Lord can trust them with a vision like this that He gave to Daniel.

Verse eleven is very interestin'. There, we find these words, "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved." What a compliment, to have the Lord come right out of the white light of Glory and tell a man that he was greatly beloved! Daniel was told this a time or two in this book. As I have said before, I want to say again, that when you get messages like that from heaven, what difference does it make what people think? It's what the Lord thinks that counts. It would be a whole lot better to be greatly beloved in Heaven and forgotten by the world than to be applauded and honored by the world and not known in that beautiful Land beyond the river.

In this eleventh verse, Jesus here, for I think He's the "certain man" who's talkin', had come all the way from heaven just to speak to Daniel. That ought to be mighty comfortin' to everybody in trouble. A lot of people get

the idea sometimes that the Lord's so busy lightin' up suns and runnin' the world and 'tendin' to everything in the universe that He can't take time to pay attention to one person. But, here's a piece where it tells us that the Lord left whatever glorious things He was doin' in Heaven to come down to this world just to strengthen, comfort, and enlighten one poor little exiled Jew in the wicked city of Babylon.

Verse twelve tells us that the Lord said to him, "Fear not, Daniel." You know, that's a powerful enemy of people, fearin'. People get scared. That's why Simon Peter sank on the waves when he tried to walk to Jesus; he got scared when one of those waves splashed up and hit him. You notice how many times through the Bible, neighbors, you'll find angels from Heaven, and the Lord, Himself, sayin' to people, "Fear not." If we could just get rid of fear, there's just no tellin' how much faith we would have and how much strength would be ours. It's fear that not only makes cowards out of people, but it also makes pigmies out of them. It robs people of peace and of their strength. While I'm a-talkin' on that, I would love to remind you neighbors that the things that you always were worst scared about, never came to pass. A good memory test is to try to recall what you were a-worryin' about this time last year. Fear's just a kind of bluff, makin' people give up and fall flat on their backs and quit over the thought of things that, chances are, will never happen. I have often thought that when the Devil finds anybody he can't scare, he goes on off and leaves him alone. We are told in James that if we will resist the Devil, he will flee from us. I believe one of the best ways to resist him is just not let him scare you.

In verse twelve, Christ gives us some mighty comfortin' words: "From the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words." You see, the very first time that Daniel made up his mind that he was goin' to set his heart to find out what the Lord

wanted him to know, to do what the Lord wanted him to do, to be just what the Lord wanted him to be, and to chasten himself, why, the machinery in Heaven started workin' to get relief to him and to see that his prayers were answered.

Notice that the Lord heard Daniel when he tried to chasten himself. Now, folks, chastenin' yourself is hard! It kinda makes me think of the time when I had a boil on my arm, and I decided I would lance it myself. I said to myself, "Now, I'm a-goin' to do that even if it does hurt me." I squared off and made a terrific lunge at that boil, and, the funniest thing, I put that razor right on the tip end of the boil, and I said, "There you are! It sure is hard to do anything to yourself." That's why self-deniel is so hard. So, when Daniel started out to chasten himself, the Lord and all of Heaven took notice of it. Yes, one way to call Heaven's attention to you and what you're doin' is to start in on yourself. It's mighty easy to chasten other people, but it's mighty hard to chasten yourself.

Now, the thirteenth verse of this tenth chapter of Daniel sure tells us something. You see, Daniel has already told us in this chapter that he'd been prayin' for three weeks; then in the twelfth verse, the Lord says Himself that from the first day that Daniel set his heart on these things, that He started out to help him. Now, naturally, one says, "I wonder what kept the Lord from gettin' there sooner. Is heaven as far as that? Did the Lord travel so slow it took Him three weeks to come from Heaven with relief for Daniel in Babylon?" But, the thirteenth verse throws a little light on this, in these words, "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia." You see, there must have been some kind of evil powers tryin' to keep Daniel from gettin' that message.

This Michael is an arch-angel. We read about him in the ninth verse of the book of Jude over in the New Testament. This verse here in Daniel kinda lifts up the cur-

tain and lets us look out there in the air beyond this world and see some of the battles that are goin' on in the unseen world. Somebody might say, "Don't you think that it was actually the king Cyrus, a prince of Persia, who held the Lord back?" Neighbors, you never would make me believe that any human bein' like that little old king Cyrus could hold back this Visitor, or even Gabriel, carryin' a message for Daniel.

To tell you the truth, neighbors, I believe that there were two people who came to Daniel. In the sixth verse, we are pretty sure that the person Daniel was talkin' about was the Lord; you can tell that from comparin' Him with the Person whom John saw in Revelation. But, later on, it says that a hand touched Daniel. Just between you and me and the gate post, I believe that was the Archangel Gabriel.

You see, Gabriel had been movin' around a right smart in this book. Over there in the eighth chapter of Daniel, you remember that when Daniel had the vision of the ram and he-goat, there were two visitors from Heaven there. One was like a man and the other was the Archangel Gabriel. The "man" told Gabriel to interpret the vision for Daniel. Then, again in the vision of the seventy weeks, while Daniel was confessin' his sins and talkin' to the Lord, Gabriel was sent to him and told him that he was greatly beloved. The hand that touched Daniel here must have belonged to the one who was held back by the prince of the kingdom of Persia and had to call on Michael. You know, and I know, that the Lord would never have to fall back on an archangel to do a thing like that for Him. I feel pretty certain that there were two people here: one, the Lord; and the other was the Archangel Gabriel.

All this reminds me of that passage in the sixth chapter of Ephesians, the twelfth verse, where it tells us that we are fightin' against principalities, powers, wicked spirits, and that we wrestle not against flesh and blood. Also, we are told in Ephesians, the second chapter and the

second verse, that Satan is the prince of the powers of the air. So, we can just make up our minds to this, that these unseen spirits are organized out there.

It was against this organization that Gabriel came and had to ask the help of Michael to get through and bring the message to Daniel. Now, somebody might say, "Do you reckon that this Archangel Michael is strong enough to whip Satan?" We are told a right smart in the Bible about how Michael handles Satan. We read there in Jude where it says that he contended with Satan over the body of Moses; that's in the ninth verse of Jude. Then, in Revelation twelve, verses one to nine, we are told that there was war in heaven, and that Michael and his angels whipped the devil and his angels.

While we are on this, I want to give you a good idea that Sarah brought out while we were talkin' about this the other night. She says that this prince of Persia here was a-workin' under Satan, and that they both hated the Jews and didn't want Satan's plans revealed to Daniel ahead of time. In the fourteenth verse here in the tenth chapter it says, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people (that's the Jews) in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." You see, what Sarah brought out here was that the purpose of this visit to Daniel was to tell him what was goin' to happen to the Jews, and, naturally, the devil wouldn't want his plans all explained before they were goin' to happen.

Well, this news sure did put Daniel down, accordin' to the fifteenth verse, "And when he (Gabriel) had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips:" This passage makes me think of Isaiah, the sixth chapter and sixth and seventh verses, in which the seraphim touched Isaiah's lips with the coal of fire from off the altar. You can tell that this was the same heavenly bein' here who touched Daniel's lips as the one whose hand he had felt on his knees, for he uses the same words again that he used in

verse ten, "greatly beloved". He then goes on to tell Daniel that he's goin' back to fight some more with the prince of Persia, and that he and Michael are workin' together to whip out Satan.

Verse twenty leads us to believe that these two, Gabriel and Michael, brought about the fall of Babylon so that the prince of Grecia would come in.

Well, it's powerful interestin'! I wish I knew more about it, but I have passed on to you the best I can find out in the dim light that I have.

## A Talk on the Eleventh Chapter of Daniel

Now, we come to study the eleventh chapter of Daniel. This same speaker is talkin' like he did in the tenth chapter. I think it's Gabriel; he says in the second verse, "Now will I shew thee the truth." You see, he's fixin' to give Daniel some history before it is written. That's prophecy; a pretty good name for prophecy is "pre-written history". And, folks, from what Sarah could get out of the history books, Gabriel sure told it just like it was! It's enough to make anybody get down on his knees and thank God for prophecy when you can see how exactly it happened.

Now, since this prophecy was given in the third year of Cyrus, the three Persian kings in verse two that were to "stand up yet" were Ahasuerus, Artaxeres, and Darius accordin' to Ezra, the fourth chapter, verses one to twenty-four. Well, it isn't a bit of trouble to turn to your history books and find out who they were, so I'll set it down here. They are known as follows: Ahasuerus as Cambyses, who ruled from B.C. 529 to 522; Artaxeres was in history, Pseudo-Smerdis, and he ruled from 522 to 521 B.C.; and the other one was Darius-Hystastes, and his rule lasted from B.C. 521 to 485. It sure did check out just exactly like the archangel told Daniel that it would.

Another interestin' thing about this second verse is the fact that after these three kings, would come the fourth king who would be very rich and one who would stir up all the realm against Grecia. Well, all you have to do is turn to your history books and find out that the fourth king was Xerxes, who ruled from 485 to 465 B.C. He was one of the richest men the world ever saw, and he sure did stir up Persia against Greece!

Verses three and four tell us about a mighty king who "shall stand up and shall rule with great dominion," that his kingdom shall be broken up, and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven. Well, we recognize this

mighty king as the same one who was the he-goat in Daniel, the eighth chapter, that is, Alexander the Great. He's the fellow that divided his kingdom among his four generals. That just fits here what this angel told Daniel about the kingdom of this great king, which "shall be divided toward the four winds".

Verse five is also interestin'. It talks about the king of the south, one of his (Alexander's) princes. He will be strong, and his dominion will be a great dominion. Well, there's no doubt about the "king of the south" bein' one of the Ptolemies who reigned over Egypt. The history books tell you all about that.

Verse six goes on to tell us that "in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and them that brought her, and he that strengthened her in these times." That sure is funny; it says that Ptolemy offered to Antiochus Theus his daughter, Berenice, as a bride to make peace between them. But, after awhile, Antiochus Theus began to put away this Berenice and took back his former wife, Laodice. It sure is funny how it all checks out, isn't it?

In verses seven and eight it tells about this: "But out of the branch of her roots (that's this woman, Berenice, who was offered as a bride) shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail; And shall also carry captives into Egypt," etc. You can read it there for yourselves. Well, it doesn't take much trouble to turn to your history books and find out who this is. This refers to the brother of this woman, Berenice, and his name is given in history, Ptolemy Euergetus. That's the fellow! He got mad at the way Antiochus Theus treated his sister and marched into Syria with a large army. He arrived too late to save his sister, but he took revenge by puttin' to death that other

woman, whom the king had taken in place of his sister, Laodice. He just tore up things in general! He carried away just what the eighth verse says here. He took back a lot of people, a lot of money, and a lot of the idols. He sure did tear it up, just like Daniel was told by the Archangel Gabriel!

I won't take up the time and tax your patience to go over all of this history. All you have to do is take the history of Egypt and Syria and lay them right down by the side of this eleventh chapter of Daniel and watch how one checks right out with the other. This prophetic account of the wars of the Persian and Grecian Empires, particularly of the Syrian and Egyptian Divisions, from verses two to thirty-one, is one of the most outstandin' arguments for the inspiration of the Word of God.

There's just one piece I must kinda touch on, and that's the thirty-second verse. It goes on there to say, "And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall be corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." Well, sir, that sure did come out fine, just like it says! You see, the Jews were terribly oppressed by a fellow named Antiochus-Epiphanes, and some of them did mighty wickedly. They left the religion of the old folks and began to worship idols just like it says here. But, there was one crowd who knew its God, and they were led by an old priest by the name of Mattathias, and his sons. Now, all these fellows are known by the name of "Maccabees", and they did a sight of good from B.C. 166 down to 47 years before Christ came. They tried to bring Israel back to what it ought to be. This family of Maccabees did their level best to make things right, down to the reign of Herod the Great, who was rulin' over Jerusalem and Palestine when Christ was born.

There's somethin' interestin' that we ought to keep in mind while we read this eleventh chapter: that is, that in the year 70 A.D., Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and then began the fulfillment of the last half of verse thirty-three. From that time until now, the Jews sure have

been persecuted; they have been scattered, and many have "fallen by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days", just as it says here.

Now, while we're readin' that, it might be good to turn over to the twenty-first chapter of Luke, verse twenty-four, where you'll read these words, "And they (that is, the Jews) shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Now, ain't that interestin'? The "times of the Gentiles", most Bible students think, are these seventy weeks that were explained to Daniel in the chapters back here. Of course, that means the times when the Gentiles are in power throughout the world. From the way that the Jews are bein' treated in some places today, and the way that the Gentile nations are on the thrones of the world, make us all realize that we are still livin' in the times of the Gentiles.

Now, from verse thirty-six on through the end of this chapter, you'll find something that's powerful interestin'. It takes up this big fellow, who's known as the Anti-christ, who's goin' to tear up things in general, goin' to fight against the Jews, and try to do so much against God. It says here in the thirty-sixth verse, "He will exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished." You can just take out your pencil and kinda draw a picture of this Anti-christ fellow right here. It goes on to say that he will not "regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all." Verse thirty-eight tells us that he's goin' to be scientific; it says, "In his estate shall he honour the God of forces." Yes, that sure is interestin', when you find so many people today tryin' to substitute scientific things for the power of God, tryin' to make folks believe that the Bible is a man-made book and that everything is run by natural forces. It sure is all told here, ain't it?

Verse forty tells us about the forces that will come against him. It says that one of them will be the king of the south, that he'd "push at him". Notice that his action is kinda weak; it doesn't seem like he's goin' to do much harm, but he's goin' to take a pass at him. Then, it says that the "king of the north will come against him like a whirl-wind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over." Lots of folks think that that's Russia. They sure do get together fightin' things up there in Russia, and they might be the fulfillment of this "king of the north" when the big fight comes off against this fellow who's goin' to set himself up against God.

Verse forty-one says that this big king is goin' to come into Palestine. The Bible says, the "glorious land", but that's generally understood to mean Palestine. It says many countries will be overthrown, and Egypt shall not escape.

Verse forty-three tells us about his many treasures; it says he will have treasures of gold and of silver.

Verse forty-four tells us the first thing that's goin' to begin the downfall of this big fellow, whom Sarah and I think is the Anti-christ. It says that "tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy." Well, you take the north up there, they sure are puttin' on a big fightin' program and gettin' ready to do something, and they sure are wakin' up in the east! Well, time will tell!

## A Talk on the Twelfth Chapter of Daniel

That brings us to the last chapter of Daniel. It goes on to say that right at the time when this big king, whoever he is and whenever he will come (of course, I don't know just who and when; I'm just an old country preacher, but I'm just readin' it to you in the light that I get), is troubled about news from the east and from the north and has planted the tabernacle of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain (that sounds like he'll be there in the land of Palestine somewhere), then, this Archangel Michael will stand up!

Now, something is goin' to come off! It tells us in this first verse that Michael is "the great prince which standeth up for the children of thy people." No wonder it adds, "There shall be a time of trouble"! Yes, I'll tell you, brother, whenever one of these archangels stands up and gets ready to do something, something is goin' to be done. It says that there shall be a time of trouble such as never has been seen. The human mind can't figure out just what that's goin' to be. There never has been anything like it in the world. What a picture!

Now, we come to something that's pretty. Things have changed; the time of the resurrection has come. In verse two we find that "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Verse three goes on to say, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Ain't that pretty?

Did you ever notice that it looks like there's goin' to be two resurrections? It didn't say that they'd all get up at once. It says, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." Then, we are lead to understand a little more about what's to happen over there in Revelation where it says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part

in the first resurrection." Yes, I reckon there's goin' to be two crowds comin' out of the ground. At least, their bodies will rise. The first section will rise up to have everlasting life; those who come out in the second resurrection will rise up for everlasting contempt and shame. Yes, that makes me want to sing that piece,

"We shall rise, hallelujah, we shall rise; Amen!
We shall rise, hallelujah!
In the resurrection morning
When the bars of death are broken,
We shall rise, hallelujah, we shall rise."

Now, verse four is a personal message to Daniel. The Angel Gabriel says to him, "Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end." The angel seems to say, "Nothing's goin' to be done about this right away; you'll have to be patient, but, God's machinery will grind it all out in due time." So, for that day and time, nothing more could be done about it. But, it seems to leave us to conclude that at the time of the end, the study of the book of Daniel will be mighty interestin', for the book will be open, people will be readin' about it and talkin' about it. Have you ever thought, neighbors, that there are more people askin' questions about the book of Daniel now than there ever has been in the history of the world?

In the last part of the fourth verse, there are these words, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Between the first part of this verse and these words, there's a jump of thousands of years, down to the time, maybe, in which we live. I declare, in our time it looks like everybody is in a hurry to go somewhere on the ground and in the air! I never saw the like! And, knowledge sure is increased. I declare, there's nothing now, hardly, that man doesn't know! Sarah was readin' me a piece the other day where some fellow says he's tryin' to raise the dead. Another fellow is delvin' down and bustin' up things into little tiny pieces, even smaller than atoms.

The Lord only knows where it's goin' to stop. It looks like there's a book on everything now. Well, anyway, it says that people will be runnin' to and fro, and knowledge shall increase at a time long after Daniel is gone on to be at home with God.

Well, here comes another one of these hair-raisin' conversations. Daniel says he looked and saw two persons standin' there, one of them on one side of a river, and one on the other side of the river. It looked like one was standin' on the side of time, and the other, over on the side of eternity. One of them said to "the man who was clothed in linen which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of the wonders?"

He who was clothed in linen "held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven and sware by him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."

Now, a lot of Bible readin' people think that when it says a "time" here, it means a year. When it says "times" that's two years, and when it says "an half", that's a half a year. So, addin' all that up, it means a year and two years and a half, which is three and a half years altogether. That sounds sorta like what we studied back yonder awhile ago when this big Anti-christ fellow will make a covenant with the people, and in three and a half years he'll break it. It sounds like this person who's talkin' is givin' Daniel some inside information, that some of these things that he's been talkin' about are goin' to come to pass three and a half years after this Anti-christ fellow starts on his program.

Poor old Daniel sure did have a lot to pass through his head! Now, these words got him all upset again, and he called and said, "O, my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?"

He answered with these words, "Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." That meant, "You go on now, you won't be here

long anyhow; you're past ninety; you've done your duty; through your mind has passed the compendium of human history, and you've left it in the records sealed up to be understood at the proper time. You're goin' to get your release now to go on into the glory of the presence of God, and these words will be opened up at the proper time, and the world will be allowed to understand it, when God wants them to know."

The words in the tenth verse are very encouragin', "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." It sure has been that way down through the years. People have laughed at this book; some have said, "I wouldn't read it"; some have said, "Nobody understands it"; but, there are, at present, a lot of earnest, honest souls who love to read it on their knees and ask God to throw the light on it as they try to get whatever they can out of it. "None of the wicked shall understand." It seems to me, neighbors, that if you're interested in readin' this book of Daniel, it ought to make you feel sorta good. I suppose that no wicked person—folks with no notion of ever changin'—would be interested here, 'cause it's tellin' of the things that will come to pass when the centuries unfold and the plans of God are worked out for this poor old broken-hearted earth.

Now, verse eleven brings us another one of these statements with dates that can just about run anybody haywire, but with the light of the Lord, you can understand it a little more, as you read it and pray about it. Here's what it says, "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." Now, read the next verse, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

Well, here's a difference of forty-five days between these two dates. It evidently means that these days are

figured out from some terrible thing that will happen and bring on the awful tribulation that will last about three years and a half, at the end of the time when the Jews are goin' through their final judgment. I guess this is the time that's spoken of often in the Bible as "Jacob's trouble" and the "time of the tribulations" on this poor old earth. Lord, help the people who will be livin' on this world durin' those three and half years! It seems to say there that there's a special promise to those who can stand it for the extra forty-five days. That will bring them up to the thousand, three hundred and thirty-fifth day after time was started again to be counted. But, anyway, those are powerful dates, and about all you can do about it is, as Sarah says, "Just be ready."

Now, we come to the closin' verse of Daniel, and it's mighty good advice to all of us, "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." You see, that was a message right straight from Heaven for Daniel. So, what Daniel couldn't understand, he could just afford to leave with the Lord after a promise like that. You see, he was past ninety; he had been in Babylon through the reigns of three great monarchs; he had been tried every way in the world with honors and with an effort to put him to death in the lions' den; he had been threatened; and he'd been hounded, he'd been betrayed, and he'd been honored; he'd worn a chain of gold about his neck, and he had been the third ruler in the kingdom; he had seen kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall, had seen great monarch come and go. The Lord said, "Don't let what you can't understand get you down, but you go on your way till the end." This certainly was not "the end" that has often been mentioned here as the latter days. It meant the end of Daniel's life.

Neighbor, that's the end that we had all better be thinkin' about as we close the book of Daniel! It's mighty interestin' to study about the changes that will take place on the surface of this old earth; it's mighty interestin' to study the prophecies to mark their fulfillment, but in all

our study, even of as sacred a subject as prophetic truth, we should never lose sight of the fact that our earthly life will come to its end some way or other, and we should be ready to meet it when it comes. So, if you are just a humble man or woman goin' about the petty little things of life, go on, do the best you can till the end comes, lookin' to God daily for help. If anybody reads these lines who happens to be honored and blessed in the affairs of the world, just go on bein' faithful to God, realizin' that you have to give an account to Him, and come on down to the end of your days without regret.

Oh, that the Lord could whisper to your heart this promise that closed the book of Daniel, a promise that came from the lips of an archangel to an old man nearin' the end of his days, "For thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Isn't that wonderful? Rest, from the heavy burdens of life! Rest, from life's disappointments and heart-aches! Rest, where they never say "Good-by"! Rest, where those you love never grow old! Rest, in the presence of God!

May the last few words of this book be a promise for you, "And stand in thy lot." Some of you have waited a long time for praise that you never received. Many a noble soul waits for applause, but only gets hisses. Many a beautiful spirit has never been understood. The world never even understood the Lord; it has never understood the truly great men and women. So, you can afford to wait with a promise like this, "Until you stand in your lot," and God has promised by His eternal self that God's people will never be disappointed, and that each one of His children, some blessed day, shall be satisfied.

"God hath not promised
Skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways
All our lives through.
God hath not promised
Sun without rain,

Joy without sorrow,
Peace without pain.

But God hath promised
Strength for the day,
Rest for the laborer,
Light on the way;
Grace for the trial,
Helps from above,
Unfailing sympathy,
Undying love."

Neighbors, you would have laughed had you been here just a minute ago when Sarah came in. Puttin' her hand on my head, she said, "Josiah, you had better not write anymore about Daniel! Your head's gettin' awful hot."

I said, "No wonder, honey! Through my poor little brain has flashed for these blessed hours that I've been writin' on Daniel, some of the reflected glories of the truth that passed through the brain of this exiled Jew in Babylon. It's enough to make anybody's head hot, even to get the reflected light; what must have been the sizzlin' heat of passion and power that flowed through the brain of this blessed little man, standin' on the "front line" in Babylon!"

Reluctantly, I confess to you that I bring these little talks to an end. I shall go back again to this book for strength when I need it; for inspiration in hours of trial or sorrow, I shall go for hope. I shall go for encouragement; and I shall look through its blessed pages down the corridors of time with great anticipation, wonderin' what the end of it will be. However, best of all, I shall look away from the scenes of earthly time to that beautiful city, where today Daniel is safe above the threat of the rulers of earthly kingdoms, far away from conspirators, away above the wreck and ruin of empire, walkin' in white with God.

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